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The penalty strikes again

WITH 12 PAGES OF SPORT



The spirit of independence

WEEKEND REVIEW FRONT



The year's best books

SUMMER READING SPECIAL

An ordinary road on the front line between hope and despair

BY NICOLE VEASH

ON A day like today it would take you 10, perhaps 15, minutes to walk the length of the Garvaghy Road. Tomorrow though, things will be different.

The Garvaghy Road residents might be scared to step outside the front door. They won't be able to get a Sunday paper or even go to church. The Army will have sealed off the entire road, leaving them stranded inside their homes.

But that's tomorrow, the day when the local Orangemen from Portadown plan to march down the length of the Garvaghy Road after their morning service at Drumcree Church. "That's the only time of the year that most people see the Garvaghy Road and if they look at the policemen in their riot gear they're bound to get the wrong idea of the place," says Mary, who lives in a Victorian terraced house at the foot of the Garvaghy Road, the road she has lived in all her life. "People imagine there's trouble down here all year round, but it's generally a quiet, safe place."

Mary lives at the mixed end of the Garvaghy Road. "I have a wee Protestant woman as a neighbour and I wouldn't let anyone touch her," she says. "There was some trouble round here the other night, so my husband went next door and brought her into our house so she wouldn't be scared and on her own. That's the way we are round here. There isn't any bitterness between the ordinary people."

The trouble kicked off when the Orangemen erected a blue metal arch, bearing the motto "In Glorious and Powerful Memory 1688-1690", across the mouth of the Garvaghy Road. Every year they put up this arch and every year local Catholic youths react with some bottle-throwing here and there.

The Garvaghy Road is one of the main thoroughfares into Portadown town centre. It's always heavy with traffic, slowed down by tractors, which weave their way out to the country.



The potential flashpoint of the Catholic Garvaghy Road, usually a main thoroughfare into Portadown, will be sealed off tomorrow

Fewer houses than you would imagine actually face on to the Garvaghy Road itself. Instead, half a dozen or so sprawling housing estates branch off the main street. Walking up the road away from Mary's house and the town centre, and towards Drumcree Church, the Union Jack bunting melts into the green, white and orange tricolour flags symbolising the Irish Free State, and visibly marking a change in territory.

Outside Ulster Carpet Mills factory, 15-year-old Anne, who lives at No 92, right at the far end of the street, is trying to persuade her eight-year-old cousin to walk into town. "I want to go shopping," she says. "But he's too scared to go because of his Celtic T-shirt. He thinks someone might attack him because they'll know he's a Catholic."

Standing outside the boarded-up VG, once the lower Gar-

vaghy Road's corner shop. Anne says she'll never want to move away from her troubled home. "You should see it at other times of the year," she says. "It's a very friendly place and I'm proud to live here."

She's right, in the main.

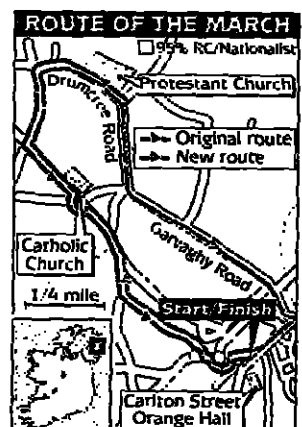
There's a well-cared-for public park on the road, a primary school, a brand new business park, smart newly erected bungalows and even a handful of leafy executive homes. But there is another side to the Garvaghy Road.

Outside the Churchill estate, 62-year-old Bridie stares at a vandalised, derelict phone box. Next to her hang two posters, one bearing the legend "No Talking No Walking". The

other shows an RUC officer and an Orangeman with "spot the difference" written underneath. "Generally it's very quiet. You've just got a few bad boys doing this sort of thing," says Bridie, pointing at the phone box. "I've lived on this road for 20 years, my whole family lives here, and every year it tears me up to see what happens."

Next to the Ballyoran estate, near the top of the road, is a small shopping parade. Two

sisters, both in their mid-fifties, stand talking about the inevitable violence that will tear its way through the Garvaghy Road. "There's always been some kind of protest as far as



I can remember," says one. "Twenty years ago we used to sit in the street with a group of mums and have a kind of tea-party. It was always very peaceful, but it didn't do much good."

The sisters, who, like many of the Garvaghy's residents, were too scared to give their names, say that they would never dream of moving house. "There's really only a few days in the year that we get bad trouble and we always go away when that happens."

At the top of the Garvaghy Road, a group of women have set up a peace camp. They are protesting at the way the Garvaghy Road is thrown into turmoil every July. "We are scared about the violence," said one. "That's why we are here."

With the hours to Drumcree ticking by, the Garvaghy Road is still living an ordinary day. It's full of mums and children, and people doing the shopping. But the atmosphere is slowly changing as the RUC sets up the first checkpoint, randomly stopping and questioning young men in cars.

Tomorrow the Garvaghy Road will be a different, less welcoming place. But don't think it's like that all the time. Ulster Prepares, page 2

Daydreamers blamed for drop in literacy

BY JUDITH JUDD
Education Editor

STANDARDS of English and maths among primary school children have fallen sharply over the past 20 years, according to an authoritative new study. Researchers from the University of Leicester blame the decline partly on an increase in traditional whole-class teaching, which has enabled children to daydream at the back of the class without being spotted by the teacher.

Another explanation, they say, is the nine-subject national curriculum which has cut the amount of time teachers devote to literacy and numeracy. Their findings offer support to the Government's decision, confirmed this week, to slim down the curriculum.

Professor Maurice Galton tested more than 400 nine- to 11-year-olds in English and maths when he conducted one of the first major studies on British



primary teaching in 1976. In 1996, he set the same tests for nearly 500 children of the same age, most of whom were at the same schools as the 1976 cohort. Average marks in the tests have fallen from 56 per cent to 45 per cent in maths, and in English from 43 to 36 per cent. The biggest fall was in reading, down from 63 to 48 per cent.

The study also shows that teachers now spend only 43 per cent of their time with individual pupils, compared with 56

per cent in 1976. Both whole-class teaching and group work have doubled. Teachers and progressive teaching methods are not to blame, it says: the decline coincides with a return to traditional methods of whole-class teaching which make it easier for children to pretend that they are working.

Professor Galton, whose research also involved detailed observations in classrooms, said yesterday: "The national curriculum means that teachers spend less time hearing individual children read and marking their work in class. And the uncritical imposition of whole-class teaching by Chris Woodhead, the Chief Inspector of Schools, has encouraged easy riding and daydreaming. Children do get more and teachers have to spend more time telling them to sit still or be quiet."

The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) said: "Children become restless when they are exposed to bad teaching."

Robinson in the clear over Maxwell deals

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Political Correspondent

GEOFFREY ROBINSON is expected to emerge with his career intact after an investigation by Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, into the Paymaster General's business deals with the late Robert Maxwell.

Sir Gordon is believed to have found no evidence that Mr Robinson was paid for his directorships of Hollis, Central & Sheerwood, Pergamon and Holcombe Holdings. As a result, he did not break the rules of the House by failing to list them in the Register of Members' Interests.

However, Sir Gordon could still rule that the Coventry MP should have registered his chairmanship of Swiss EDM, the British subsidiary of a machine tools company, from which he apparently did take a salary. Until 1992, unpaid directorships did not have to be registered.

Mr Robinson was chairman

of the company between 1983 and 1985, but he did not record it in the register until 1987. However, it is possible that the House of Commons Standards and Privileges Committee will let the omission pass without heavy censure of the minister because it took place so long ago.

However, such a move could be controversial because other MPs have been punished for comparatively minor breaches of the rules. Robert Wareing, the Labour member for Liverpool West Derby, was suspended from the Commons for a week for failing to register an interest in Metta Trading, from which his consultancy company received £6,000.

The issue of whether Mr Robinson took payment from Hollis has been at the centre

of controversy in recent weeks. The Paymaster General has said he did not take any money, and accounts which suggest he did receive the money have been dismissed by the Prime Minister's official spokesman as inaccurate.

Earlier this year Sir Gordon criticised Mr Robinson's failure to register an interest in two offshore trusts, of which he is a discretionary beneficiary. He concluded that while Mr Robinson had not broken the letter of the rules "it would have been better" if he had registered the interest. If the minister had consulted him he would have given him this advice, he said.

Sir Gordon has also received a complaint from the Shadow Chancellor, Francis Maude, about Mr Robinson's estate in Italy, which is run by two companies.

The property is not mentioned in the register of interests.



Veuve Clicquot

CHAMPAGNE OF THE SEASON

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HOME
The figure of Clifford Norris has loomed large over the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. But who is he?

POLITICS
Nearly 50 Private Members' Bills died yesterday afternoon, sparking calls for parliamentary reform

FOREIGN
At the end of his nine-day visit President Clinton said he was confident democracy would come to China

BUSINESS
The Rack issued its third profits warning this year and announced that two directors will leave

SPORT
France beat Italy 4-3 on penalties after their World Cup quarter-final ended 0-0 after extra time

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Pudding sales in decline

Sales of puddings are in sharp decline as health-conscious restaurant-goers turn up their noses in favour of starters, according to a survey. Page 5

CoE says ordinands increasing

The Church of England has reported a record increase in the ordination of new clergy in what it claims are the more "spiritual" Nineties. Page 10

Cancer cases drop

New cancer cases have fallen in Britain over the past five years despite experts' predictions of a continuing rise due to the ageing population. Page 11

FOREIGN NEWS

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Florida fires rage

Thirty thousand people in north-eastern Florida were placed under an evacuation order yesterday as forest fires raged out of control. Page 13

Warning on Nigerian sanctions

Chief Emeka Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary General, warned that sanctions against Nigeria would not be lifted until after democratic elections. Page 14

Budapest crime crackdown

Police in Budapest yesterday launched a crackdown against organised crime networks to prevent all-out war between the capital's gangs. Page 16

BUSINESS NEWS

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City nervous over rate rise

The City remained nervous about the prospect of another interest-rate rise, with experts saying there was still evidence of inflationary pressures. Page 18

Liberty warns of job cuts

Liberty, the struggling department store, warned of likely job cuts as it reported an £11.5m loss. Page 18

SPORTS NEWS

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Ivanisevic reaches final

Goran Ivanisevic squandered two match points in the fourth set then beat Richard Krajicek 15-13 in a marathon fifth set to reach the Wimbledon final. Page 24

Kirsten hits record 210

Gary Kirsten, batting longer than any South African in Test history, scored 210 to give his side, now on 467-4, an unassailable position in the third Test. Page 26

WEEKEND REVIEW

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Fergal Keane

When Unionist leaders traditionally spoke of the "people of Ulster", they were really using code for the Protestant people. Page 3

Howard Jacobson

Seeing photographs of the Nation of Islam turning up in their sharp Paul Smith suits and dinky red bow-ties for the Stephen Lawrence enquiry last week brought to mind my own recent encounter with the movement. Page 5

James Roberts

Perhaps the first point to be made about Moshood Abiola is that he is not the Nelson Mandela of his chaotic and corrupt country. Page 5

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Cryptic crossword, Review, page 32



An Army sniffer dog checking the area around Drumcree yesterday as tension rose ahead of Sunday's Orange march

Brian Little/PA

Ulster holds its breath as Orangemen prepare to march

THE MOOD in Northern Ireland, as tomorrow's Orange march at Drumcree looms ever closer, was summed up by a Protestant bishop: "We are all holding our breath about Drumcree. If it goes badly wrong, as it has done in the past, I think the divisions will be really, really deep indeed."

BY DAVID MCKITTRICK
Ireland Correspondent

The words were those of Dr James McHaffey, Church of Ireland Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, but the sentiments were identical on the Catholic side of the community. Apprehension and tension have risen steadily as no accommodation has emerged.

new First Minister, and his deputy, Seamus Mallon.

The technical position is that the march has been re-routed by the Parades Commission so that the Portadown Orangemen may go to their annual Drumcree church service but may not return to the town along the Catholic Garvaghy Road. The Orange Order has said it does not accept this ruling and intends to stage protests. A thousand extra troops have been drafted into Northern Ireland to deal with possible disturbances.

Tensions have been heightened both by the anticipation of trouble and by a wave of sectarian arson attacks. Firebombings which destroyed or damaged 10 Catholic churches were followed by a number of apparently retaliatory attacks on Protestant premises, including an Orange hall.

Dr McHaffey, speaking yesterday after visiting a damaged Protestant church, said: "We have to understand that because of events, political and otherwise, there is a tremendous amount of tension in the community. It has been bad in the past and I think this is a crunch year and something needs to be done. We can't go through the same situation that has happened in previous years."

Denis Watson, head of the Orange Order in County Armagh, said the situation looked bleak, adding: "Emotions are high. This seems to be the year they have decided to break the Orangemen, but if they think that they are very mistaken. The parade has to go down the road - it's as simple as that."

Briton charged with murder in France

AN ENGLISH football fan appeared in court yesterday charged with the murder of a French comedy actor stabbed to death on a train on the day of England's World Cup defeat by Argentina.

BY EILEEN MURPHY
AND LUCIE MORRIS

French police said that Paul Birch, 42, an engineer from Twickenham, south-west London, confessed to the murder of the Frenchman, whom he mistook for an Argentine fan. Detectives said that Mr Birch launched the unprovoked attack on Eric Franchet, 33, after seeing him "smirk at him". Police said that Mr Franchet had been sitting opposite Mr Birch on a train from Grenoble to Lyon on Tuesday when the England fan lunged forward and stabbed him in the stomach.

He was due to appear in court at Bourgoin-Jallieu, near Grenoble, charged with murder before being presented before the Judge of Instruction. A police spokesman said yesterday: "Birch confessed to the killing while he was being questioned by police in Grenoble the following evening about fighting."

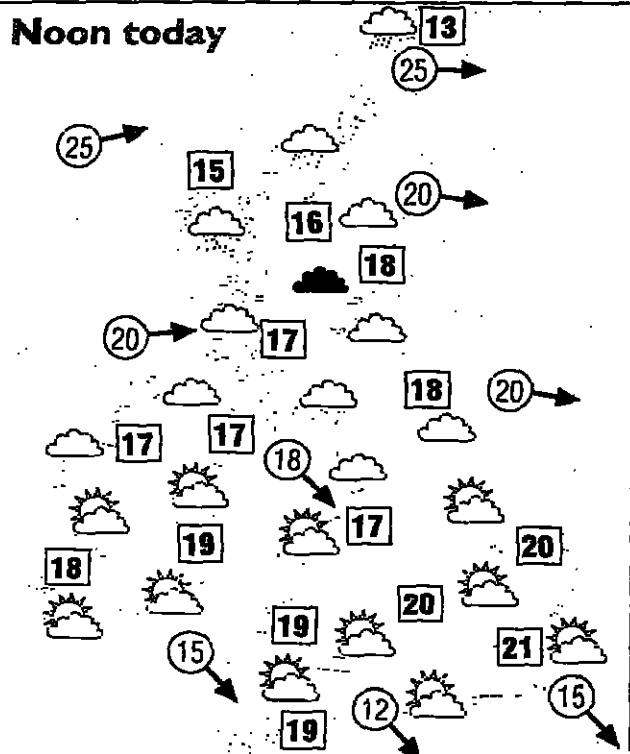
Legionnaires' alert for World Cup fans

FOOTBALL FANS who travelled to watch the World Cup in France were yesterday warned about a possible outbreak of Legionnaires' Disease, after a man died and the number taken ill rose to four.

"Big-hearted" Scotland fan Harry Cook, 32, who was born in Glasgow and lived in Blackpool, Lancashire, died shortly after fulfilling his ambition to watch his team play. Three others were already known to have contracted the disease - two Scots and an Englishman - but a Dane is also now receiving treatment, the Department of Health said.

The bug has an incubation period of two to 10 days and so far the only common link identified between the cases is that the men were all in Paris in mid-June.

BRITAIN TODAY



OUTLOOK

Northern Scotland will be blustery with occasional rain, especially towards the north coast. Southern Scotland, Northern Ireland and northern England will also have a lot of cloud, but any early drizzly rain will die away with a little sunshine developing to the east of high ground. Wales, the Midlands and southern England will be mostly dry with any early banks of low cloud clearing away to leave some good spells of warm sunshine, especially along English Channel coasts.

South Wales, the south Midlands and southern England will be warm tomorrow with sunshine, although it may cloud over with light showers later. The rest of the UK will be cloudy with showers, although there will be sunny intervals in some eastern areas. The first half of next week will be cool with northerly winds. The best of the bright weather will be in sheltered western areas, but it will be cloudy with sharp showers.

For the latest forecasts dial 0891 5009 followed by the two digits for your area indicated by the map (right). Source: The Met. Office. For more details...

LIGHTING UP TIMES

	Belfast	Birmingham	Bristol	Glasgow	London	Manchester	Newcastle
22.01	21.32	21.29	22.05	21.20	21.40	21.47	21.47
to	to	to	to	to	to	to	to
4.55	4.52	5.01	4.40	4.51	4.47	4.35	4.35

HIGH TIDES

	AM	HT	PM	HT
London	10:18	5.9	22:45	5.7
Liverpool	07:44	7.4	20:23	7.5
Avonmouth	03:06	9.9	15:48	9.9
Hull (about 100m)	02:39	7.0	15:05	7.1
Greenock	08:21	2.8	22:02	2.7
Dun Laoghaire	08:31	3.4	21:01	3.4

AIR QUALITY

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Belfast	17	63	17	63

Test match fans have been banned from drinking at Old Trafford. But at sporting events around Britain this weekend a privileged few are allowed to carry on quaffing

Tennis? Make mine a double

Alcohol flows by the river at Henley

BY ANN TRENEMAN

THE CORPORATE hospitality tents at the Henley Regatta are right on the river. All the better, to catch the action. After all, the boys in robin's egg blue from Eton were on at 3.20pm. Surely then the men in grey from Corporate would look up from the dregs of their three-course lunch.

"Oh yes!" shouted Gordon, taking a drink of tomato juice (he had to drive back to Lincolnshire) as we watched the action.

"Can you believe it? I can't believe it!" exclaimed his corporate sponsor, Doug, who was sticking with champagne.

Nor could I. Here we were, on a lovely patch of England looking out at some of the best rowing in the world and, frankly, Gordon and Doug did not give a toss. In fact, they had their backs to the river. Eton's finest may be dazzling but Gordon and Doug much preferred football and the Italy v France match. And they were in luck because a large television had been placed in the corner of their tent just for that very purpose.

I asked Gordon if he was ashamed of himself. He tried to answer but just then Del Piero was given a yellow card and all conversation had to stop to absorb the events in St Denis. I said the question again. "No," said Gordon.

"But it is the first time that the World Cup has been on during Henley."

Corporate hospitality is another world from the real regatta. For starters, the rented marquees with their flags and "real" windows and flower boxes and signs that denote which company has hired the space are on the other side of the river from the Stewards' Enclosure and the stands.

The two sides are linked by a small boat but most Corporate types don't mingle. After all, mobile phones are banned across the river and that means they might have to stop talking and watch some rowing.

Clearly Margaret had not been watching any rowing. She was standing in the doorway of one of the tents.

"I want to be interviewed," she said, stabbing at her mobile with a finger. What was she trying to do? "I'm trying to turn the damn thing off," she said but then gave up. "Look I'll tell you what I think of this!"

"The food is shite and the wine is shite. They are charging £225 per person and they promised fine wines. Well, do you call Jacob's Creek Chardonnay fine wine?" She looked at me and I noted that it did cost more than £2.99 a bottle.

The likes of Gordon and Doug really do not see what the fuss about corporate hospitality is. They see it as the "social cement" of the business world.

And as the television is switched over to Wimbledon, all eyes turn back to the big screen.



Cheers for revellers at Henley, above, Wimbledon champagne drinkers, below left, or ale at Old Trafford, below right. But poorer punters must go thirsty

Brian Hutton, Robert Hallam, Peter Byrne

Who gives a damn about tennis when you can drink yourself to oblivion at Wimbledon



IT'S only three syllables, but the name of the repository of the nation's sporting aspirations can be quite a tongue-twister on five pints of Pimm's. But hell, who gives a damn about the tennis when you can drink yourself to oblivion and back at someone else's expense?

As Tim Henman prepared to sweat it out on the Centre Court yesterday, three other flowers of British manhood were intent on their own form of competitive sports. "Go, go, go!" they chanted, throwing their heads back and attempting to drain an entire bottle of champagne each in turn.

It's the season, that time of year when toffs come out to play, when men and women with more money than sense make an exhibition of themselves at sporting fixtures. At Wimbledon, they did not dis-

BY KATHY MARKS

appoint. They wore absurd blazers and old-school ties. They barked impatiently into mobile telephones.

They complained loudly about the price of strawberries and Veuve Clicquot.

Tennis attracts a more mixed crowd than Ascot or Henley, but there were enough examples of upper-crust misbehaviour yesterday to satisfy the most fanatical class warrior.

First-time visitors to the All-England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club should not be misled by grandly named venues such as the Wingfield Restaurant or the Conservatory Buffet.

This is where the plebs hang out, sunbathing, eating ice-cream, watching the tennis relayed to open-air big screens. More privileged types congre-

gate away from the public gaze, in the recesses of the Members' Enclosure, for instance, where old codgers dozed in a post-prandial haze, winking only to demand the latest Test score.

They are also found in the suites and lounges ringing No 1 Court, where sponsors and debenture-holders gather for pre-match champagne and canapés. Above all, they frequent the tented corporate hospitality village, where companies like Texaco, Rover and Price Waterhouse entertain their favoured employees before shepherding them into sought-after Centre Court seats.

The timing of the Henman-Sampras clash - the match did not start until 4.30pm - meant plenty of time to get tanked up. Outside one of the marquees, a group of merchant bankers

guzzling pints of Pimm's gave a spirited rendition of *The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck* (unauthorised version).

Next door, half a dozen men in suits were boasting about the size of their investments. "I say, do you remember old Pete Henning from school?" asked one, chomping a cigar. "Well, he stands to make 35 grand from the RAC, you know... it's been bought out."

"Jammy bugger," replied another, admiringly.

You wonder why they bother trekking to the hinterlands of west London instead of simply getting legless in a pub close to home. But they had not just come along for the booze, goodness no, said Sebastian, a languid youth with floppy hair.

There was another big attraction at Wimbledon, and it wasn't the tennis. It was, to put

it bluntly, posh totty. Let it be recorded, then, for those who like that kind of thing, that there were plenty of women around yesterday with plunging cleavages and cut-glass accents, and that they were every bit as noisy and obnoxious as the men.

Let it also be recorded that a tennis match did take place between Henman and Sampras, and that some of the people in the hospitality area managed to stagger over to the Centre Court to watch it. Not all of them, though. Two young men only got as far as Court No 12, where they stopped abruptly, surveying the empty expanse of grass with vacant expressions. As the afternoon wore on, they could be found stretched out on benches outside the court, snoring loudly, dead to the world.

Such a dry wicket that even the bar staff were caught out

IT WAS all very sedate and proper in the Cornhill Hospitality marquee. Rather like a vicar's tea party.

The sombre atmosphere may have reflected the state of play at Old Trafford where South Africa were thrashing England, but it was politely described in the marquee as slow.

At least 80 senior Cornhill employees and their guests sat in small groups at tables care-

BY ESTHER LEACH

fully laid for afternoon tea. They had had a lovely lunch and were only too glad to leave the stands and return to the marquee to watch the World Cup on television.

No-one was much in the mood for alcohol and the barstaff were left with not too much to do. "The cricket is pretty slow. It's been slow all

day. But this is very nice," said Greg Smith, an insurance broker from Manchester, pouring another cup of tea and reaching for another ham sandwich. "I've never seen anyone go over the top or do anything ugly here. Cornhill are after all the main cricket sponsors in the country."

A colleague, Peter Warburton, said corporate hospitality was meant to be a time to spend in good company. "It's a

chance to talk to each other. You can't do that with football."

Cornhill host and former England and Derby wicket keeper Bob Taylor OBE agreed it was unusually quiet in the Manchester ground yesterday. His opinion was that perhaps people had misunderstood the new regulations governing the control of alcohol. "I think people believe you can't have alcohol at all in the grounds

but in fact the bars are open.

"And I think it is acceptable to bring in up to four cans of beer on a ticket. It shouldn't have any effect on corporate hospitality. People can drink as much as they want. One or two people will go over the top but it doesn't happen a great deal. There's less of that kind of thing now than 10 years ago and I think that's to do with drink driving."



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Gerald Coen relaxing at the An Tobar in Galway yesterday after landlord Ronnie Greaney dropped the smoking ban he imposed for two days a week from Ash Wednesday. His customers had been drifting away, so now he has reinstalled the cigarette machine *Joe O'Shaughnessy*

Peer faces arrest over missing £37m

SWEDEN YESTERDAY issued an arrest warrant for Tory peer Lord Moyne, the former Jonathan Guinness, in connection with the disappearance of £37m.

Lord Moyne, the stepson of the fascist leader Sir Oswald Mosley, faces questioning over the alleged misappropriation of the money from an investment group in which he bought a 52 per cent stake in June last year.

State prosecutor Bo Skarinder yesterday applied to a Stockholm court for arrest warrants for Lord Moyne, who was chairman of the Sweden-based Trustor group, and his

business associate Lindsay Smallbone, who was chief executive.

Mr Skarinder said: "This is the first step in the extradition process. They are to be arrested on grounds of embezzlement, swindling and book-keeping crimes."

Since March, Lord Moyne, who is the eldest son of Lady Diana Mitford, has had to live on £1,000 a week, after his assets were frozen by a court order.

Lawyers acting for Trustor went to the High Court in London and obtained a £40 million 'mareva injunction', to impose a freeze on his bank accounts and assets worldwide.

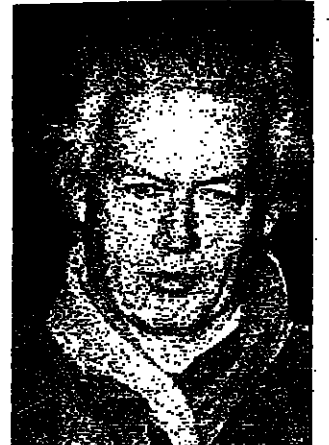
Although he is accused of embezzlement, Lord Moyne denies wrongdoing, saying he was duped by Swedish businessmen who asked him to front the purchase of the Trustor shares.

He says he took immediate action to try to protect the interests of shareholders when the true situation became apparent.

Two of Lord Moyne's former Swedish advisers, Thomas Jisander and Peter Mattsson, have already been charged with breaching or assisting a breach of shareholder trust.

Eton-educated Lord Moyne, 67, was a non-executive director of the Guinness drinks group from 1961 to 1988.

The Conservative peer is a former chairman of the Monday Club, the right-wing pressure group.



Lord Moyne: Questions over missing millions

Last year he published *Requiem for a Family Business*, his insider's account of the Distillers-Guinness takeover battle in the 1980s.

The mareva injunction prevents him from enjoying any royalties from the publication, however.

Lord Moyne had been virtually unknown in Scandinavia until last summer when he spent around £20m obtaining his majority stake in Trustor.

He then tried unsuccessfully to gain control of the Finnish sports company, Amer, which owns the famous Wilson brand name.

The peer, who is the author of a book called *Shoe: The Odyssey of a Sixties Survivor*, has admitted he lacks the business acumen of some of his Guinness forefathers.

He once sold a Gainsborough portrait because he was "pushed" for cash.

Gene-modified maize near organic farm

FIELD TRIALS of genetically modified (GM) maize will be allowed to continue in fields in Devon near an organic farm, the Environment minister, Michael Meacher, said yesterday.

The decision was attacked by Friends of the Earth as "demonstrating the Government's inability to control this monstrous industry". The announcement came as protesters prepared to move onto farms in Oxfordshire today to rip up experimental GM crops.

Mr Meacher said he was accepting the advice of the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (Acres), which said that there were no grounds

for halting the experiment in Devon since it should not cross-breed with organic sweetcorn being grown on Guy Watson's farm just over a mile away.

Mr Watson is seeking a judicial review to revoke the consent for the maize's release, on the basis that it could cross-pollinate with his crop and that the effect on his business was not considered when the Department of the Environment approved the trial. If there was cross-pollination, he could lose his licence as an organic farmer from the Soil Association.

He once sold a Gainsborough portrait because he was "pushed" for cash.

IN BRIEF

Levels of lead in blood fall

LEAD LEVELS in blood have fallen after Government moves to curb its use in a range of consumer goods, it was announced yesterday. Surveys by the Department of the Environment show levels have dropped by three to five times in all age groups in the population, compared with 10 to 15 years ago. Most people in the UK now have very low blood lead levels, resulting from smaller amounts of lead in petrol and paint and the removal of leaded solder from food cans and lead plumbing from homes.

Tobacco giants challenge ban

FOUR TOBACCO giants yesterday asked the High Court for permission to challenge the legality of an official report by the Scientific Committee on Tobacco and Health, which calls for bans on tobacco advertising and smoking in public places. British American Tobacco, Gallaher, Imperial, and Rothmans say they have not been properly consulted. Mr Justice Moses said he would give his judgment on Monday morning.

Ancient law jails 'wanton driver'

A MARKET trader prosecuted under a 137-year-old law at the Old Bailey for knocking down a traffic warden as she gave him a ticket was jailed for six weeks yesterday. Mohammed Gulzar, 39, of Walthamstow, north-east London, was convicted last month of a charge that by "wanton or furious driving" he caused bodily harm to parking attendant Linda Moore last October. The law was passed the year before the motor car was invented.

Lumley move on animal trade

THE ACTRESS Joanna Lumley is giving Tony Blair 13,001 reasons to act against EU subsidies paid to exporters to ship live animals to the Middle East and Africa. She is handing over 13,000 protest cards sent in by supporters of Compassion in World Farming as well as making a personal plea to the Government to stop the trade, which is subsidised by £200m of EU cash a year to help support markets for spare EU meat.

5,000-year-old 'cricket bat' found

ANCIENT BRITONS may have been keen cricketers, according to archeologists who have discovered a 5,000-year-old bat on the banks of the Thames at Chelsea. The bat is made of oak and is about 2ft 6in long. It has a rounded handle with baseball bat-type knob at the end and has been carbon dated to between 3,540BC and 3,360BC. It was surrounded by stone axes and the remains of a forest.

SOMETIMES
IT'S EASIER
TO TALK
TO SOMEONE
YOU
DON'T LIKE.



If you tell your girlfriend, will she think less of you?

When you have a problem, it's the most natural thing in the world to want to talk it through with someone.

Sometimes, though, this creates another problem: who's the best person to confide in?

An obvious choice would be a close friend. But let's face it, we don't always choose our friends for their amazing powers of tact, diplomacy and discretion. Tell one person, and you may end up telling the world.

You may be lucky enough to be able to talk to someone in your family. Then again, you may be one of the large number of people who find talking to your nearest and dearest agonisingly embarrassing.

A girlfriend or boyfriend? If you can, great. But sometimes we don't want to expose our weaknesses to those who fancy us.

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The Samaritans

We'll go through it with you.

The criminal mastermind whose shadow hangs over Lawrence case

BY PAUL LASHMAR,
KIM SENGUPTA AND
ANDREW MULLINS

THE FIGURE of Clifford Norris has loomed large over the Stephen Lawrence inquiry. "The Norris family are corrupt and that is beyond dispute," according to Michael Mansfield, QC, who represents the Lawrence family.

Father of David Norris, one of the five young men accused of the racist murder, Clifford is variously described as a gangster and target criminal. He is currently serving eight years for cannabis importation and firearms offences.

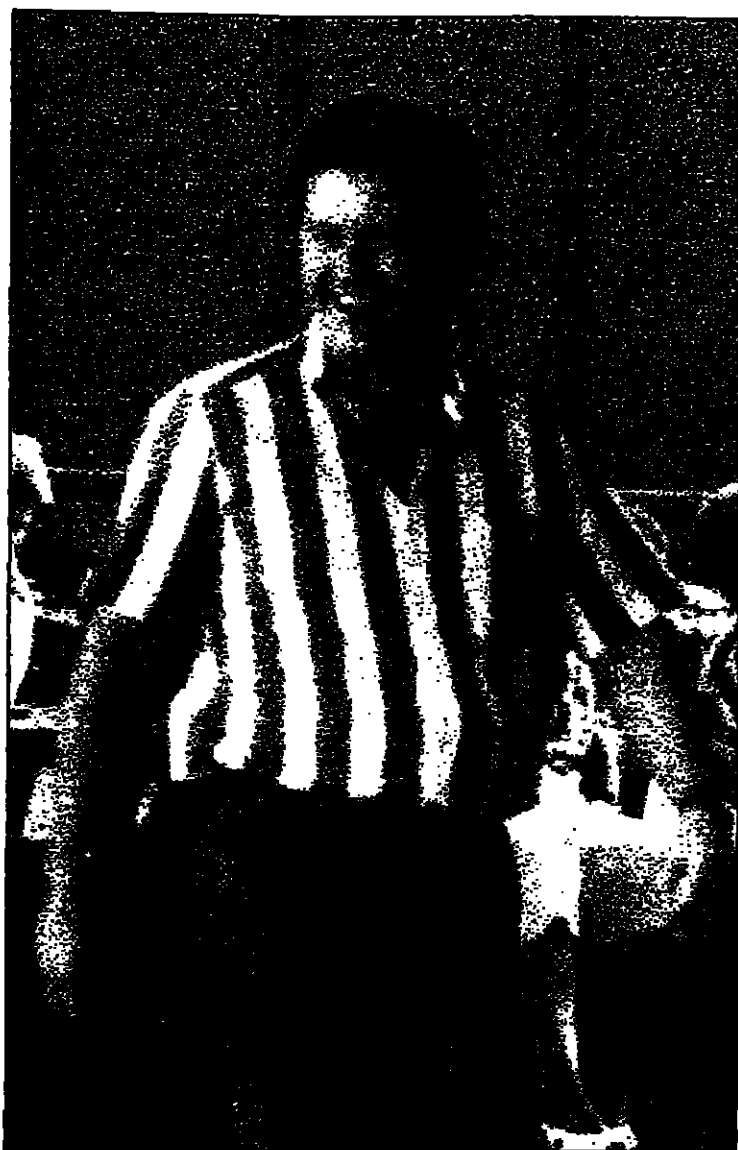
During the inquiry into the police handling of the Lawrence murder, skilful questioning by Mr Mansfield has created the image of a criminal mastermind and the implication that Norris controls corrupt police officers who may have been responsible for nobbling the police investigation.

Who is Clifford Norris? Inquiries by *The Independent* reveal that he comes from a network of south London petty criminal families that have rocketed into wealth, extreme violence and some long prison sentences by the lucrative drugs trade that has boomed since the 1980s. One officer told us: "I would not describe Clifford as highly intelligent. More that he is shrewd and has street savvy."

The Norrises are a long-standing working-class family from south London. In the post war years, the extended family lived in the area round the southern end of Tower Bridge. According to one local retired criminal in his mid 60s who went to school in Amelia Street with some of them, "the Norrises were a big family. They could handle themselves in a fight and if you argued with one, you had to reckon with the whole family. But they weren't big-time villains. They just did the usual bit of ducking and diving."

Not long after the war, Alexander Norris, who described himself as a fruit and veg salesman, married Mary Smith and they moved to Strickland Street in Deptford. Clifford Norris was born in 1958, joining an eight-year-old brother, also called Alexander. Both were born in St Alfreys Hospital, Greenwich. By the 1970s the Norris brothers, still living in Strickland Street, Deptford, earned a reputation as violent tearaways and minor criminals.

In those days, the Deptford



South London gangster Clifford Norris made enough money from drugs to buy a big house in a leafy cul-de-sac in Chislehurst

and Rotherhithe area was notorious for breeding families of armed robbers like the Arif and the Fraser clans.

But it was the rapid emergence of the huge drugs trade was to give opportunity to every petty villain to enter the big time. It was already becoming clear that Clifford, known to his mates as "Nozzer" was the dominant and more ambitious brother. Clifford was already living with Teresa and at the tender age of 18 Clifford became father of a baby boy, David.

There is some evidence that Norris was already dealing in drugs on a large scale. In 1983 Alex and Clifford were driving down the New Kent Road when they were cut up by a van. They forced the van to pull over. Clifford leapt out and smashed the van window with a hammer.

As the police arrived, Clifford was seen to throw away his wallet. In it the police found a key which opened a safety deposit box stuffed with £17,000 in cash. Clifford denied all knowledge of

the money and was fined £150 for criminal damage.

Norris was soon swimming in cash. He and Teresa moved to Chislehurst, to a large secluded house in a private cul-de-sac with electronic iron gates.

A series of flash cars followed. On one occasion he bought a Porsche 911 with white leather trim from a dealer in Billingham. Much to the astonishment of the dealers, Norris turned up with the cash in a carrier bag and they had to go to the bank for help in counting the bundle of used notes.

He began to attract the attention of Customs and Excise which launched Operation Cream as investigators followed the south Londoner to meetings with Dutch drugs suppliers all over Europe throughout 1987 and into 1988.

He was covertly photographed by the Swiss Police while meeting his contacts in Geneva and it became clear to Customs that a drug deal was being organised.

On 21 June 1988, a low loader lorry arrived by ferry from Holland. As it was being unloaded in Ripple Road, Barking, East London, the Customs team struck: a quarter of a ton of cannabis was found and a group of men were arrested including the driver and Brian Chapman, another criminal associate of the Norrises.

Simultaneously, Customs officers raided Norris's house in Chislehurst but he was not home. When he and Alex returned later by car, they spotted the Customs team, and sped off. Both disappeared.

While the brothers were on the run there was a murder outside the Old Manor House pub in Deptford, on the evening of 16 May 1989. A 24-year-old man, Tony Smith, from nearby Anerley, had been shot through the chest at close range. In a dawn raid in July 1988, the police arrested Alex Norris, who was hiding out at the All Hallows caravan site on the Isle of Sheppey in Kent. Described as "unemployed

from Bromley" he was charged with the murder and the Barking drugs importation. The murder charge was later dropped for lack of evidence but in November Alex was sentenced to nine years for his part in the cannabis smuggling operation.

Officers believe that Clifford left the country, possibly spending time in Australia and returned when he heard that his son David had been arrested for stabbing a youth called Stacey Benefield.

The police set up surveillance on Norris's wife, Teresa, still living at the Chislehurst

house. Eventually she led them to the holiday cottage in Hastings where Norris and his associate Donald Stainer were hiding out. They found a small arsenal including a silenced Ingram's sub-machine gun. Stainer was arrested with a loaded Beretta in his pocket.

The two men had been bidding their time playing golf. Two sets of golf clubs were found and a list of golf courses in the South, some ticked off.

The police handed Norris over to Customs to face the outstanding drugs charges. Here we see the only glimpse of vul-

nerability because while on remand in Lewes Prison he tried to kill himself by slashing his wrists. He was sentenced on 9 November 1995 to 90 months for the drugs offences and two years consecutively for the possession of firearms.

The judge order that unless Norris repaid £385,000 in criminal proceeds he would face another four years. The money had not yet been paid and Clifford and Teresa's house valued recently at £378,000 is in fact under injunction by Customs and Excise and liable to be sold to recoup the money.

Man with the power to fix trials

THE POWER the "very dangerous and frightening" Clifford Norris could exert in fixing juries and witnesses was revealed at the Lawrence inquiry this week.

The hearing was told that weeks before Stephen Lawrence was murdered, Clifford's son David had been accused of stabbing with "a sword-like weapon" a young man called Stacey Benefield.

According to Michael Mansfield, QC, who represents the Lawrence family, Clifford Norris, although still on the run over drug offences, fixed David's trial. He was helped by another well-known criminal, Joey Pyle, a former associate of both the Krays and the Richardsons. By fortunate coincidence, the foreman of the jury in the Benefield stabbing trial was a relative of Pyle.

During a break in the trial, the foreman assured David Norris, who is one of the suspects in the Lawrence murder case, that he would be all right. The foreman, who cannot be named, was later jailed for a £23,000 cheque fraud.

A retired police officer alleged at the Lawrence inquiry that Norris also gave £2,000 to Mr Benefield to change his evidence. Mr Benefield spent the money on videos but still gave evidence. David Norris was acquitted.

Again, during the investigation into the Lawrence murder, the police became aware that associates of Clifford Norris were threatening and bribing witnesses. It was at this point the police decided to try and find him.

PAUL LASHMAR

The restaurant pudding comes to a sticky end

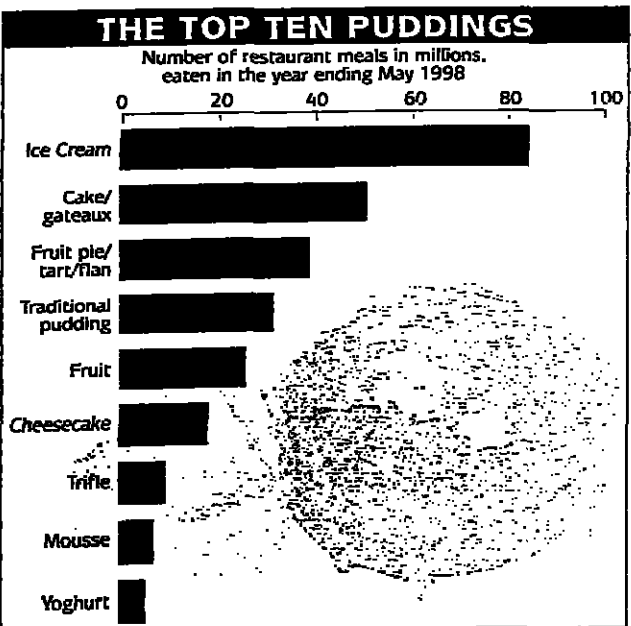
BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

SALES OF puddings are in sharp decline as health-conscious restaurant-goers turn up their noses in favour of starters, according to a survey. A combination of healthy eating trends and the rise in popularity of *hors d'oeuvres* has resulted in restaurant sales of desserts plummeting by 18 per cent.

Sarah Hancock, consumer director of Taylor Nelson Sofres, the market research company which conducted the survey, claimed the figures reflect a major shift in the nation's eating habits.

"Puddings are losing out against starters. Starters are on the up and up but sales of desserts are in decline. People are more likely to go for starters much more than they used to because they are so creative these days."

She added: "People are running out of space so at the end of their meals are making do without pudding. Because a lot



of people think they are fattening anyway they have a good incentive to give them a miss."

According to the researchers, it is mainly women who are abandoning puddings because the average man is less

worried about the effect of the calories on his waist line. In some age groups men are eating more puddings.

A spokeswoman for the researchers, who conducted 62,000 interviews on out-of-

home eating habits, added: "Over 65s are the most likely to have dessert with their meal. This is probably because they are more conservative and have been brought up on a traditional three-course meal."

Ms Hancock added: "Although ice cream sales are still in decline it is still the top dessert."

Gary Rhodes, owner of City Rhodes restaurant in London, said that presentation of desserts was an important factor. "Look at sweet trolleys - they look stunning when they leave the kitchen but an hour later they look like a bomb has hit them."

Aldo Zilli, owner of three restaurants in Soho, London, said he believed that diners may misguidedly be turning down dessert for health reasons.

He said: "It is mainly middle-aged diners who are worried about their weight. But they are often the same people who will knock back an extra bottle of wine, which also contains a lot of calories."

A swallow back in summerland

THE INSPIRATION for one of Arthur Ransome's best loved characters in his novel *Swallows and Amazons* has died.

Mavis Altounyan was known as Titty because of her love of a nursery rhyme character with the same name.

She and her brothers and sisters inspired Ransome to write about the group of chil-

dren who had amazing adventures on an idyllic island. Titty, a gifted artist, died early yesterday after a long illness. She was 78. Ransome spent the summer of 1928 with the children, who were on holiday with their grandparents in the Lake District, the setting for *Swallows and Amazons*.

Brigit Sanders, Titty's

younger sister and president of the Arthur Ransome Society, said her sister was the liveliest and most imaginative of the children.

Titty Altounyan was born in Syria to Armenian-British parents and went to school in England. She later studied at the Chelsea School of Art under Henry Moore.

In 1954, she married Melkon Guzelian and they made their home in the Lake District before later moving to Bradford to be close to their son Asadour, 41, daughter Rahel, 39, and their four grandchildren.

Her funeral will be held next Friday at Coniston, in the Lake District.

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OC4F/4.7

Christie wins McVicar libel case



Linford Christie shows a winning smile. James Horton

THE ROLLER-COASTER life of John McVicar, the former armed robber, took a ruinous twist yesterday when he was left with a £200,000 bill for falsely claiming that Linford Christie had used drugs to become the fastest man in the world.

But the Olympic gold medal sprinter could also be a loser after it later emerged that he may have to pay about £115,000 in costs – dwarfing the £40,000 he was awarded in damages.

The confusion came at the end of a 14-day libel trial between two powerful personalities that has produced tears, insults, and laughter. It also prompted the 70-year-old judge, Mr Justice Poplewell, clearly unaware of the athlete's penchant for figure-hugging Lycra, to ask: "What is Linford's lunchbox?"

At the centre of the High Court trial was an article written by Mr McVicar, once described as Britain's most wanted man, that suggested the 1992 Olympic 100 metres champion had cheated his way to the top by taking banned drugs.

The jury yesterday found by a majority of ten to two that Mr Christie, 38, was defamed in the 1995 article, "How did Linford get this good?" in the now-defunct magazine, *Spiked*.

The printers, Wiltshire (Bristol) Ltd, and the distributors, WH Smith and Johnsons News Ltd, each fully accepted the jury's verdict and Mr Christie's "complete innocence" of any allegation of drug-taking.

By JASON BENNETTO
Crime Correspondent

They each expressed their regret for the part they had played and had jointly agreed to pay Mr Christie a total sum of "over £40,000 in damages" plus his £26,000 legal costs.

But it later emerged that Johnsons can claim £115,000 costs from Mr Christie because he had refused a higher out-of-court settlement offer than the damages awarded yesterday.

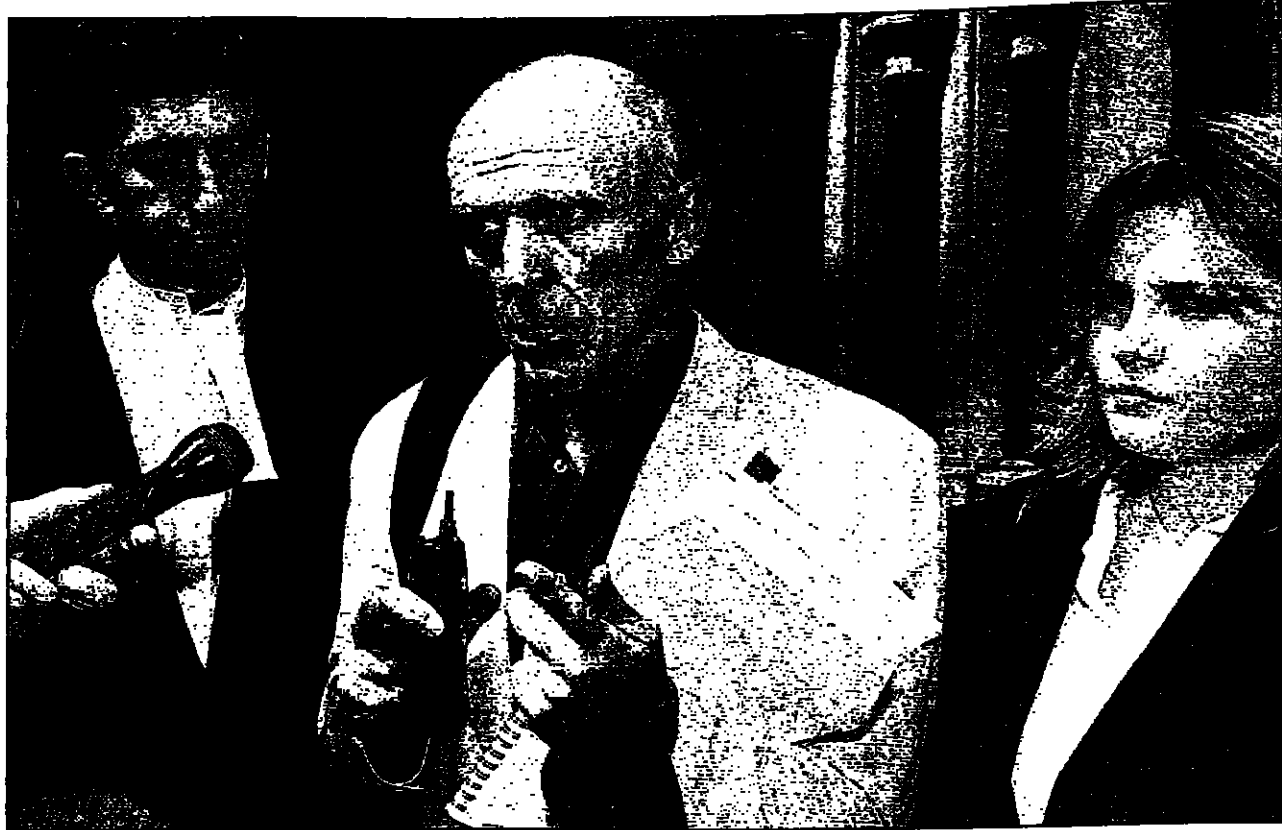
Mr Christie will also have to wait to see if he can recoup the estimated £200,000 costs of the trial against Mr McVicar.

Asked on the steps of the court whether he would be out of pocket, Mr Christie said: "This was never about damages – it was about my reputation. My reputation is very, very important to me."

He added: "My idea was not to make money. I had tried very hard and then someone said that I was a cheat. I don't like it."

But Malcolm Pearce, chairman of Johnsons News Ltd, did not appear unhappy at yesterday's result. Slipping champagne on the steps of the law courts he said: "This is going to stop plaintiffs playing the libel lottery game. I don't think they will be inclined in the future to take distributors to this expensive roulette table."

Mr McVicar, who defended himself, said he did not regret having written what he did, or having contested the case. No



John McVicar, and his barrister David Price, speaking after losing the High Court libel action. James Horton

damages were awarded against him. He added that he would appeal against the costs.

The two central characters provided an entertaining and often intense spectacle. Riled by probing of what lay behind his talent Mr Christie, whose style in an instant, was ostentatiously polite to "Mr McVicar".

Only once did he laughingly refer to him as a "nutcase".

He made a point of saying he did not hold Mr McVicar's past against him. Reminded that Mr McVicar's last conviction was in 1970 and that he had worked as a journalist for 20 years, the athlete said: "I think

it's good now that you are now a part of normal society. I commend you on that."

Mr Christie's emotions only split over during the "lunchbox" exchange, when he had to explain to the judge that the reference was to his genitals, and when he entered the witness box and lapsed into an almost catatonic state. "I just got so emotional about my athletics," he eventually managed to tell Mr Justice Poplewell through choked-back tears.

In the 1980s, Mr Christie established himself as Britain's greatest sprinter and its most successful athlete in history. His greatest achievement was to become the oldest man in history to win the 100 metres Olympic title at the age of 32.

Until yesterday Mr McVicar had an impressive record for defending himself in court. In June 1996, he was praised by a judge for his "skill" and "ability" at handling himself in court following a unanimous verdict against a charge of assaulting a neighbour in Battersea, south London.

Often arriving at the High Court with minutes to spare, mopping sweat from his brow after a cycle ride through the traffic, Mr McVicar appeared confident and seemed to possess an apparently endless technical knowledge of athletics. But his quick wit and absolute belief in himself failed spectacularly yesterday as he was landed with a crippling legal bill.

Born in West Ham, London, Mr McVicar was a grammar schoolboy whose criminal career began in 1956 and included spells in borstal for robbery. In 1966, he was serving time for robbery and assault when he escaped from a prison coach and spent four months on the run. He escaped from Durham jail in October 1968, remaining at large for two years before recapture. By 1972, his rehabilitation was under way, when he passed three A-levels in Leicester jail. In 1974, he published *McVicar By Himself* and went on to script the film of his life, in which Roger Daltrey played the title role. He gained a sociology degree in 1977.

Military sale to beat cuts

MILITARY LAND and buildings in some of the country's most valuable locations could be sold to save the armed forces from the effects of Treasury cuts.

Speculation is mounting that when the Government publishes its strategic defence review next Wednesday, a large-scale disposal of land will be among the proposals.

The Duke of York headquarters of the Territorial Army (TA), adjoining Sloane Square in London, is thought to be at greatest risk, along with the Royal Air Force's Uxbridge base in west London. Property developers will be most excited at the possibility of the Army's barracks in the prime London locations of Chelsea, Hyde Park and Regents Park coming on the market.

Although Ministry of Defence and TA spokesmen refused to comment yesterday, it is known that the Treasury has been demanding savings.

Stephan Miles-Brown, of Knight Frank estate agents, said the Duke of York barracks on the King's Road would be worth "millions and millions". He said the TA site's lay-out,

with buildings set around a cricket pitch, was very appealing and a five-bedroom house there could fetch £3m.

"I would keep the green space, and create a new London square. Some of the buildings are very nice and it's a very sought after area, the SW3 postcode," he said.

George Robertson, the Secretary of State for Defence, is likely to offend traditionalists by suggesting selling some of Britain's most historic barracks.

The sale of the TA headquarters would be a double blow to the reservists who are already expected to find their numbers cut as a result of the review. But the Treasury has been demanding substantial cuts from the defence ministry's £22bn budget.

Other reports yesterday suggested, however, that savings in some areas will allow for expansion in others, including an increase in the strength of the regular army by 4,000 to more than 116,000 personnel and the reprieve of the Rosyth dockyard in Fife.

Jail for train conman, 72

A 72-YEAR-OLD conman, who turned deception into an art form during a 60-year criminal career, was jailed for two and a half years today for cheating train passengers out of hundreds of pounds.

Whether he was spinning a line about charity work in Bosnia, being an ex-serviceman, or even an old friend, Jack Smith usually had his victims believing every word. His *modus operandi* was to soften them up with a display of gushing friendship and allegedly-remembered old times over a cup of coffee, before moving in for the kill and relieving them of up to £85 each, London's Southwark Crown Court heard.

He was eventually arrested in April this year by a police officer who recognised him from security video footage.

Barrister Roger Smart, for the prosecution, told the court the seven counts of theft that Smith admitted were the latest in a line that stretched back to 1938. During that time he had accumulated 102 convictions, mostly for theft, at 41 court appearances.

Passing sentence, Judge David Elter QC, told the bespectacled, grey-haired Smith, of no fixed address, that his "sophisticated begging" gave ordinary beggars a bad name and made it harder for them to earn a living.

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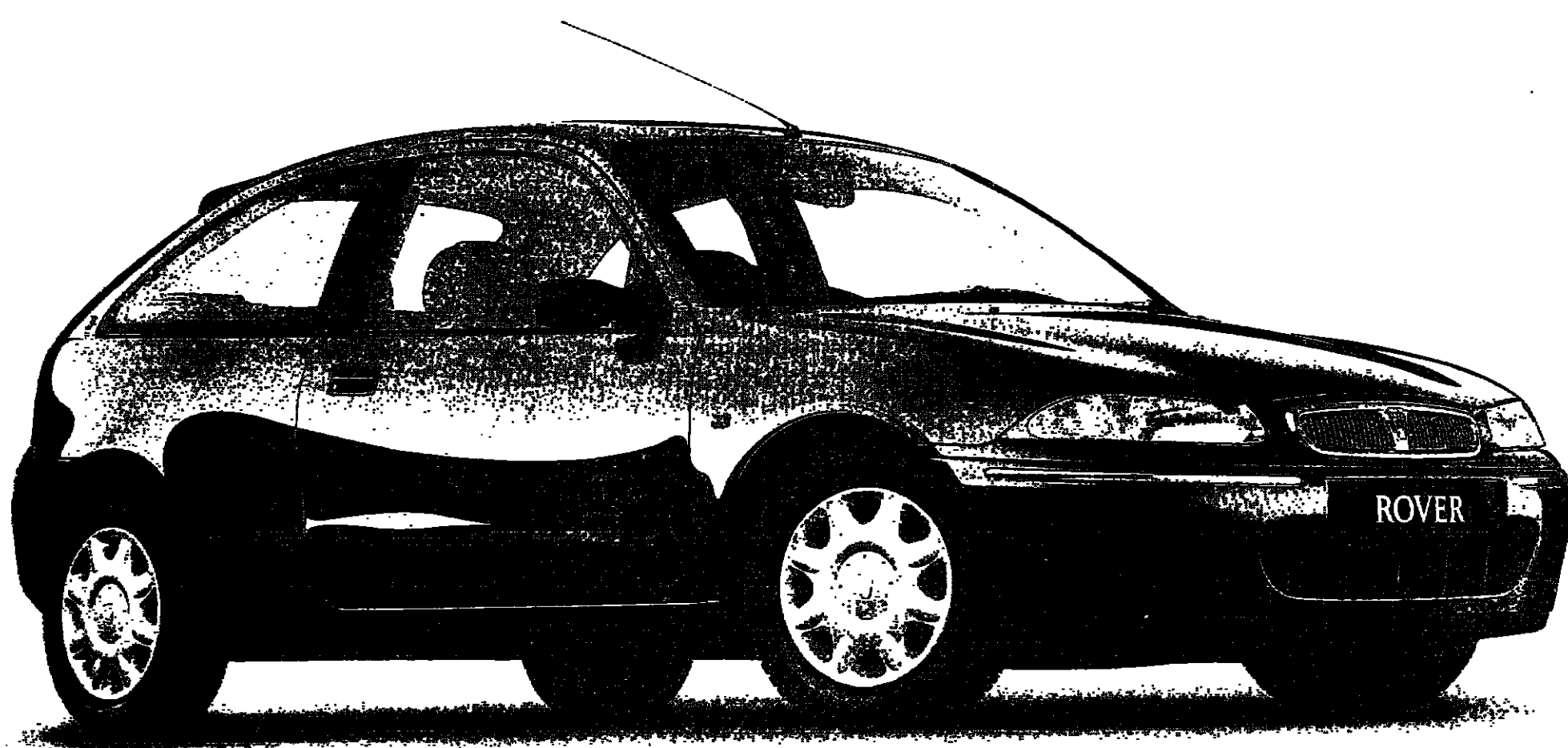
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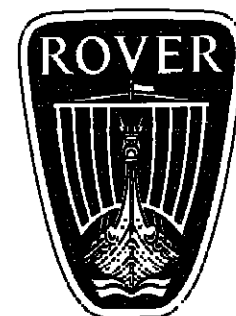
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Government whip plays Guy Fawkes with Private Members' hopes

THE HOUSE of Commons turned its attention yesterday to the remaining stages of 53 Private Members' Bills which backbenchers had introduced in the current session.

Controversy surrounded the role of Eric Forth (C, Bromley and Chislehurst) who had earlier in the session objected to a Bill introduced by his colleague, Sir George Young (C, North West Hampshire). This was a Bill to regulate minicabs in London on a similar basis to black cabs.

Mr Forth defended his action on the grounds that, when he forced the Bill to have a committee stage, Sir George and the Government tabled 50 amendments. This sub-

stantially altered the Bill from the one which would otherwise have reached the statute book if Mr Forth had withheld his objection.

Mr Forth is not, as his critics would have us believe, anti-democratic. He believes that it is wrong for Parliament to smuggle legislation through without debate, and he is only the latest in a long line of parliamentarians to use procedural devices to ensure debate.

Although Mr Forth was a minister in the Tory government for nine years, he is more at home as a backbencher. Elected in 1983, he quickly established a reputation as a right-wing bruiser. He looks and talks tough and does not gift-wrap

his views either in Parliament or in letters to his constituents.

He once attended, with me, a right-wing No Turning Back Group dinner for Baroness Thatcher when she was Prime Minister. During a lull in the conversation (or should I say in Lady Thatcher's monologue) she turned to him for his views. Mr Forth responded with the question: "When are we going to have some real Thatcherism and why aren't any of us serving as ministers in your government?"

Hoist by his own petard, he was forced, subsequently, to accept her invitation to become a minister, even though he had done every-

THE SKETCH



MICHAEL BROWN

thing he could by voting against the government on a number of occasions, to try to remain on the

back benches. With a penchant for loud and unusually disgusting ties (of which he owns at least 100) he cuts a forceful presence on the Tory benches.

Yesterday, armed with tomes of parliamentary statutes on the Explosives Act, 1875, and enough files and paper to speak for ever, he sunk his teeth into the Fireworks Bill, being introduced by Linda Gilroy (Lab, Plymouth Sutton).

The art of parliamentary filibustering is similar to cricket. Geoffrey Boycott staying at the wicket for five hours. Like cricket, it is necessary to have other batsmen at the wicket to keep the innings going. Mr Forth played Boycott while Ed-

ward Leigh (C, Gainsborough), Tim Collins (C, Westmoreland and Lonsdale) and Andrew Lansley (C, South Cambridgeshire) provided interventions, enabling Mr Forth to catch his breath. This is known, in the trade, as in-flight re-fuelling.

At 11am, the Speaker granted a private notice question to opposition defence spokesman, John Maples, who complained that the Ministry of Defence had leaked large sections of the forthcoming defence review to journalists.

Mr Maples bought Mr Forth half an hour of time - rather as if bad light had stopped play. Refreshed with more paperwork, Mr Forth re-

sumed at the wicket. By this process the Fireworks Bill was "talked out" at the end of business. The remaining Bills were then put to the House. But where was Mr Forth? In fact he only objected to about three Bills (not the minicabs Bill, which was passed).

The real Guy Fawkes, who blew up most of the remaining Private Members' Bills, was the Labour whip on duty, Jim Dowd. On behalf of the Government, he exploded 29 Bills in five minutes.

So when sanctimonious Labour members blame Mr Forth for killing their precious Bills, I hope he will point them firmly in the direction of the government Whips' Office.

Call to end 'slaughter' of the Bills

IN THE annual "slaughter of the innocents" nearly 50 Private Members' Bills died yesterday afternoon, sparking calls for parliamentary reform.

Many Bills fell as members shouted: "Object," which automatically ends their passage on the last day allocated to debating them.

The Liberal Democrat Deputy Chief Whip, Andrew Stunell, blamed Conservative MPs for the legislative carnage, saying: "The Tories should be ashamed of their tricks, which will cost people dearly in the next 12 months."

But of the Bills that were axed, 29 were killed by the Labour whip Jim Dowd and only six by three Conservative MPs, Eric Forth (Bromley and Chislehurst), David Maclean (Penrith and the Border) and Sir Paul Beresford (Mole Valley). None of the other Bills were moved in the House.

BACKBENCH RIGHTS

BY DAISY SAMPSON

However, two balloted Bills and one further government-endorsed Private Members' Bill escaped the cull.

The Private Hire Vehicles (London) Bill, sponsored by Conservative former transport secretary Sir George Young, was given parliamentary approval and can now move onto its next stages in the Lords.

Sir George said: "My Bill, if successful, will pave the way for a licensing system in London that will at last protect consumers from cowboy operators."

It will end the anomaly whereby only London minicabs are neither licensed nor regulated. Last year 67 women were sexually assaulted by minicab drivers and 18 were raped.

The Bill, which had cross-party backing, was blocked earlier this year by Mr Forth, a former Conservative minister, who had a last-minute change of heart yesterday.

The Wild Mammals (Hunting with Dogs) Bill was withdrawn by its sponsor Michael Foster (Lab) yesterday morning, before Parliament sat.

Although the Bill got a 260 majority in the Commons at its Second Reading last November, Mr Foster knew that it would fall yesterday.

He said: "The cynical tactics of my opponents were all too clear. It would be wrong to sacrifice such worthy Bills as the puppy farm, fireworks, minicab and energy efficiency Bills by keeping my Bill on the Order Paper, when it has little chance of becoming law."

However, only the proposed regulation of London minicabs made any progress.

Defeat admitted on hunt ban

MOVES TO ban hunting with hounds came to a widely predicted halt yesterday after the Labour MP Michael Foster withdrew his Private Member's Bill on the subject.

The Bill was almost certain to fail for lack of time even before its sponsor pulled out of the final parliamentary day for such legislation.

Mr Foster said his oppo-

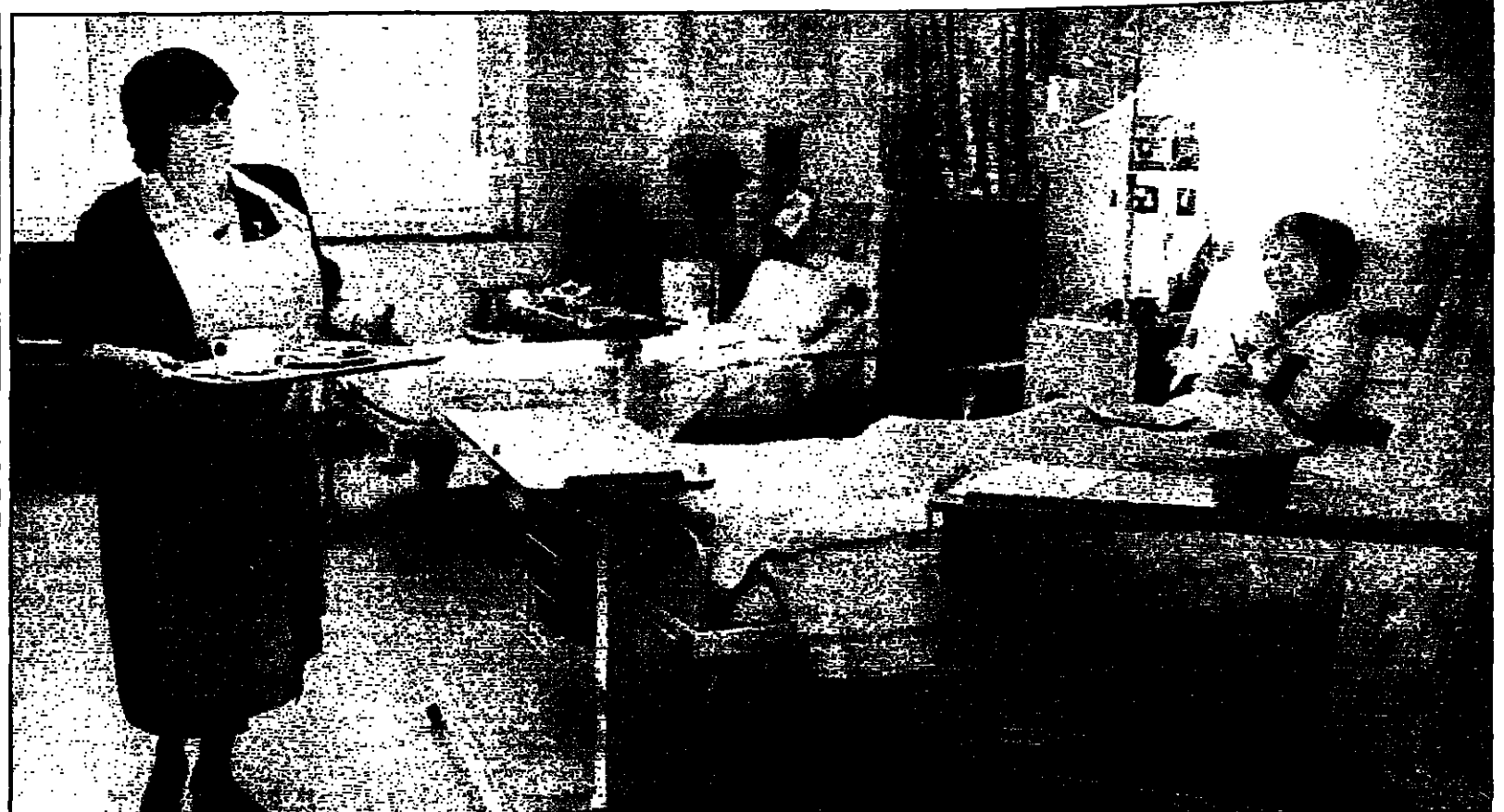
BY FRAN ABRAMS

nents would otherwise have employed "cynical tactics", using his measure to block other proposals, including new legislation on puppy farms.

He brought in the Bill after coming top of the ballot for Private Members' Bills, and it had a majority of 260 in the Commons at its Second Reading.

MPs opposed to the ban had already deployed delaying tactics to prevent it from becoming law.

Mr Foster said other Bills should not be sacrificed when his own proposal had little chance of becoming law. He would continue his fight and added that given the huge Commons majority on the issue "it is inconceivable that hunting will survive this Parliament."



Ann Widdecombe, the Conservative spokeswoman on health, helps out at Guy's Hospital in London

Tom Piltson

Brown to publish plans on single currency this year

BRITAIN COULD be ready to join the European Single Currency soon after the next election, Gordon Brown said yesterday.

In a letter to the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee, the Chancellor said he believed it was still not realistic to believe that Britain could join during the present Parliament.

"Nonetheless, with our programme of economic reforms and business preparations, it is realistic to think that the economy could be in a position to allow the UK to join the single currency early in the next Parliament," he wrote.

"This is a sensible and practical framework within which to plan. It is a framework which

MONETARY UNION

BY FRAN ABRAMS
Political Correspondent

provides stability for both business and the financial markets." Mr Brown added that the Government had recently started work on an outline plan for the changeover which it planned to publish at the end of this year.

Business had been closely involved in the preparations through the Business Advisory Group on EMU. Plans would have to be updated as Britain benefited from the experience of other countries which joined in 1999.

A campaign had already started to raise awareness, but

a market survey by the Treasury had shown that many businesses still knew little about the single currency. Of a sample of 1,000 small businesses and 300 medium sized businesses, 10 per cent were unaware that the currency was to be launched in 1999. Only 11 per cent knew it would be launched on 1 January, and only 5 per cent had made any preparations.

The Conservative trade and industry spokesman, John Redwood, said Britain would have to rejoin the Exchange Rate Mechanism before the next election if it wanted to go into the single currency soon after.

"To be sure of being allowed in, they would have to take us back into the ERM. The only

thing on offer at the moment is Britain joining at 2.95 deutschmarks, which most businesses are very worried about," he said. "I see nothing in current government policy which means the British economy is suddenly going to snap into line with the German economy."

However, a Treasury spokesman said Britain had no intention of rejoining the ERM. It was "utter and complete nonsense" that Britain would have to go in at a rate of 2.95 deutschmarks to the pound.

There was nothing new in Mr Brown's letter, published in response to a Treasury Select Committee report on preparations for EMU, he added.

In a statement last November, Mr Brown said: "In order to give ourselves a genuine choice in the future, it is essential that the Government and business prepare intensively during this Parliament so that Britain will be in a position to join the single currency, should we wish to, early in the next Parliament."

Giles Radice, the chairman of the Treasury Select Committee, said the weakness of arguments against the single currency were becoming increasingly clear.

"Overall, British business will gain from membership of the single currency - that is why an increasing majority of UK firms support British membership," he said.

Tories protest over Labour's leaks

MINISTERS CAME under pressure yesterday amid claims that they had briefed journalists on forthcoming announcements on the strategic defence review and the reform of the Child Support Agency.

Tory complaints in the Commons about press coverage of the issues came as a No 10 spokesman rejected claims by John Major that the Downing Street press office had become highly politicised.

He said the suggestion, made by the former prime min-

PRESS RELATIONS

BY FRAN ABRAMS

ister was wrong. Several spokesmen who worked in No 10 had previously worked for Labour but many others were long-term civil servants.

"There are a number of us who worked under the last government and we are as politicised now as we were then - which is not at all," he said.

In the Commons, the Speaker, Betty Boothroyd issued a

stern warning to ministers against leaking proposals before they had been put to MPs. She said: "If there has been direct leaking and direct briefing of policy changes then I certainly deplore it most strongly. I am most anxious that on any new policy, any change of policy, properly elected members of this House are told first."

Miss Boothroyd was responding to Simon Burns, the Conservative social security spokesman, who said newspaper stories about the CSA re-

vealed an abuse of Parliament. He said: "Yesterday there was systematic briefing of journalists of what the Government propose to say in Monday's statement."

"There has been some briefing of Sunday papers yesterday. There will be further briefings today of Sunday papers. And on Sunday itself Ms Harman will be doing a television programme, where she will be further outlining the changes to the CSA. The House of Commons will not hear of these

changes until 3.30pm on Monday at the earliest. There were also complaints about media stories on the defence review, to be announced on Wednesday.

The armed forces minister, John Reid, was forced to answer an emergency question on the issue from the Conservative defence spokesman, John Maples. He denied that there had been any briefings on the conclusions of the review, and accused the Conservatives of spreading rumours by producing their own dossier on it.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Soundings to be taken on new water regulations

A CONSULTATION exercise on introducing new water regulations will be launched on Monday, environment minister Michael Meacher announced in answer to Fiona Jones (Lab, Newark).

£1m down Tube for £2 coin

THE ESTIMATED cost of adapting ticket machines at London Underground stations to take the new £2 coin is £1m, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State Glenda Jackson said in answer to a written question tabled by Nick Gibb (C, Bognor Regis and Littlehampton).

Degree of indifference

LAST YEAR only 13 per cent of applicants for full-time engineering degrees were women, Kim Howells, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department of Education and Employment, told Phyllis Starkey (Lab, Milton Keynes South West) in a written answer.

Land-mines Bill published

THE GOVERNMENT published the Anti-Personnel Mines Bill, which seeks to ratify the Ottawa Convention banning land-mines. The Bill, to be debated in the Commons on 10 July, has all-party support and is likely to become law. The Bill's timing has been seen as honouring the memory of the late Diana, Princess of Wales, who spent the final months of her life campaigning for a worldwide ban on land-mines. The anniversary on 31 August of her death is seen by many as an appropriate time for Britain to ratify the Convention.

THE HOUSE



Straw calls for volunteer ethos

THE HOME Secretary, Jack Straw, called for a new culture of voluntary service to the community. He said that, in future, voluntary activity should come to be seen as the norm rather than the exception. Mr Straw said the Government wanted to encourage the "active community" in

which individuals and organisations accepted a balance of rights and responsibilities.

Lilley advises caution on EMU

THE Tory deputy leader, Peter Lilley, cautioned against Britain joining a single currency - even it appeared to be getting off to a good start. Mr Lilley re-affirmed the Tories' doubts about EMU, and said: "It is possible that, initially at least, the single currency will seem to be working reasonably well for those who are members. Our job is to make clear that such an appearance does not constitute an argument for joining."

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صكنا من الاول

British powerboat sets round the world record



Captain Ian Bosworth, left, and project leader Jock Wishart celebrate their record run

By PETER WOODMAN

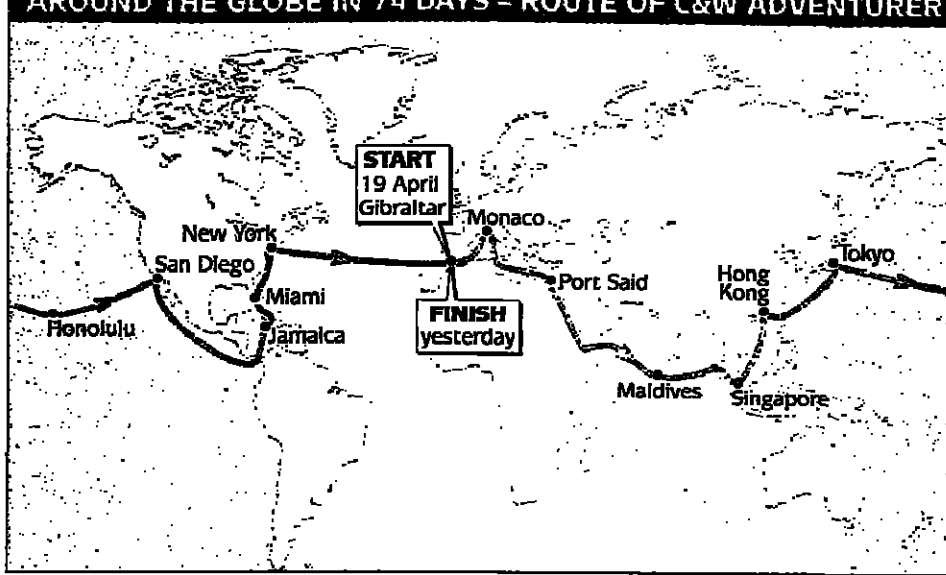
A BRITISH-BUILT and British-crewed vessel overcame stormy seas and intense heat to beat the world record for circumnavigating the globe by a powered vessel. The £2m Cable & Wireless Adventurer monohull powerboat arrived back in Gibraltar yesterday after a journey of 74 days, 20 hours and 58 minutes.

The project leader, Jock Wishart, 46, said: "I'm mentally drained but this has been an amazing achievement." The Adventurer, built in Southampton, set off on its 26,000-mile journey on 19 April. She sliced more than eight days off the record set by an American submarine, the Triton, in 1960.

The 14-strong crew of the Adventurer, who included a 60-year-old grandfather and a 22-year-old student, had to do running repairs to the vessel and cope with high temperatures and bad weather in the Mediterranean and Atlantic.

They visited 13 ports in 11 countries, including Hong Kong, Honolulu, Kingston and New York. Now the vessel, built

AROUND THE GLOBE IN 74 DAYS - ROUTE OF C&W ADVENTURER



by Vosper Thornycroft, will become part of the British pavilion at EXPO '98 in Lisbon.

Mr Wishart, from Kingston upon Thames, London, said: "We had four or five difficult moments but everyone got on well. There were no rows at all. I'm thrilled that Britain has this record as well as the world land speed record."

The "baby" crew member was Sarah Aynesworth, 22, a Bristol University student from Yorkshire. She said yesterday:

"The closest sea experience I'd had prior to this was in a rowing boat." The oldest members were Bill Mackay, from Glasgow, and Alan Goodwin, a grandfather and director from Hayling Island, Hampshire.

The Adventurer was designed by Nigel Irens, a leading multi-hull engineer who based it on a concept by the marine engineer Sir Charles Parsons, who used the design to create the Turbina, which achieved a speed of 34.5 knots when it gatecrashed Queen Victoria's 1897 Diamond Jubilee Review of the Fleet at Spithead.

CSA to bring in fixed-rate payments

THE CHILD Support Agency is to undergo a radical overhaul, simplifying maintenance awards and introducing a fixed formula of payments.

Harriet Harman, the Secretary of State for Social Security, is due to announce on Monday a plan to force the absent parent to hand over fixed percentages of their income.

A higher rate will be paid for a first child, with lower percentages of earnings awarded for a second and third child. But no payments will be made for any subsequent children. The final figures are not yet clear but in one recent draft of the Green Paper they were set at 12 per cent for a first child and 5 per cent each for a second and third child. The new method will apply to those who have already been assessed by the CSA. Ministers believe that 70 per cent of existing parents with care of a child or children will be better off under the proposed system.

For the 30 per cent who risk being worse off, there will be transitional relief: the reduction in their income is expected to be limited to a maximum of £5 per week per year until they reach the maintenance level the new scheme will establish. Another key element of the package is a plan for a "disregard" - a mechanism which would allow lone parents to keep more of their benefit payments, probably amounting to about £10 per week, enabling them to feel that they are better off if they co-operate with the system.

The Green Paper is attempting to simplify a system of assessment which, back in

BY GLENDA COOPER
Social Affairs Correspondent

1991, began as a fixed formula but over time became more and more complicated. Further changes are necessary because staff currently spend 90 per cent of their time on assessments and just 10 per cent enforcing payments.

At present 30 per cent of all childcare assessments take more than six months to resolve and, if an absent parent's circumstances change, an average of 26 weeks is spent adjusting maintenance levels. The idea of a family courts system which would deal with cases has been rejected because the workload would be too high. It is estimated that there will be one million cases on the CSA books by 2001.

The chairman of the Commons Social Security Select Committee, Liberal Democrat MP Archy Kirkwood, said: "I think certainly the present situation is completely discredited and the flat rate system is a sensible approach to consider."

But a spokesman for Families Need Fathers said: "Rough justice is no justice at all. We would welcome any attempt to simplify the grossly over-complicated formula, but family circumstances are so different from family to family that all sorts of things need to be taken into account."

Maeve Sherlock, director of the National Council for One Parent Families, said: "While the principle of a simplified formula is welcome it would be vital to set the percentage at a level which will deliver proper support for children."

Sorry is agency's hardest word

"MUMMY, why don't you make friends with the CSA? We don't play any more," says Janet Barton's younger son. For half his young life, his mother and father have been in dispute with the agency after a series of errors worsened his father's illness.

Mrs Barton and her partner, Phil Cave, were paying maintenance for his two children from a previous relationship of £160 a month through the courts. "Some may say he should have been paying more but he was paying what he was told," she says.

In 1995 they were told Mr Cave had to pay £9,118.72 for maintenance for his 15-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter.

Mr Cave was in hospital for tests and was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis, which, Mrs Barton says, was exacerbated by the way the CSA treated

BY GLENDA COOPER

them. They tried to get in touch with the CSA but said there was no response. In October 1996, 15 months later, it admitted the original bills and reminders were sent in error.

By then Mrs Barton had given up a job she enjoyed to take redundancy in order to pay the CSA. It finally acknowledged procedural errors and admitted Mr Cave's condition "had been exacerbated by the stress of the agency's actions".

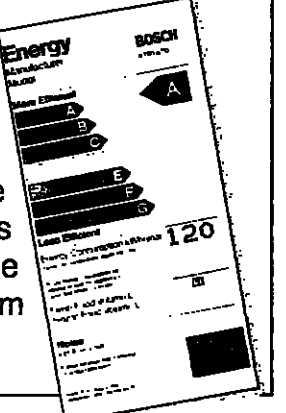
It offered Mrs Barton £1,500 compensation in January. After further complaint it was increased but the CSA still refuses to compensate Mr Cave for loss of earnings. "We're not saying the CSA caused his MS, but it worsened it, which means he had to leave work earlier," says Mrs Barton, who is determined to go on fighting.

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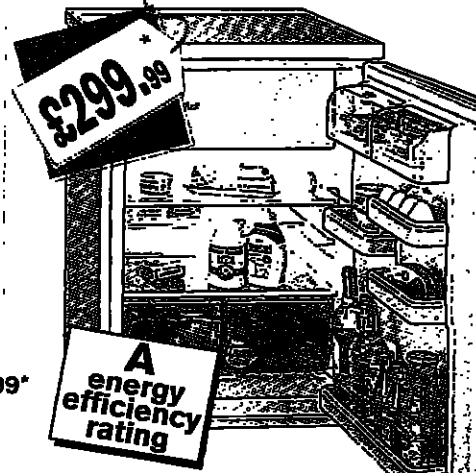
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Clergy hear call in spiritual Nineties

THE CHURCH of England has reported a record increase in the ordination of new clergy in what it claims are the more "spiritual" Nineties.

The fifteen per cent rise, from 310 ordinands taking their vows as deacons last summer to 363 this year, has been accompanied by increasing numbers of people going into training to become priests: there are more than 1,200 people in training.

Although there is still a shortage in some dioceses, William Beaver, the Church's director of communications, said: "This is a record rise for the 1990s. I attribute it to the fact that people are more spiritual than they were in the 1980s. There is more awareness in the value of serving others."

He added: "Attendances are up in our churches but we just need more priests on the

BY LINUS GREGORIADIS

ground. We are calling on congregations and parishes to put people forward."

At a meeting in York this weekend the General Synod will debate a report published yesterday which said there are not enough clergy in 23 out of 43 dioceses.

A shortfall still exists. There are currently 9,132 full-time stipendiary clergy in the Church of England, who serve 13,000 parishes. The difference is made up in most areas by unpaid clergy ordained into the local or national non-stipendiary ministry. However, the number of candidates recommended for ordained ministry has risen from 364 in 1993 to 501 in 1997.

The Ven Gordon Kuhrt, chief secretary of the Advisory Board on Ministry, said: "It is a solid

trend going in the right direction and set to continue for the foreseeable future."

Steve Jenkins, the Church of England's spokesman, said that in the past people have been put off being ordained by negative factors such as question marks over the future of theological colleges and controversy about the church's finances.

He added that he did not believe that the material advantages of the career were responsible for the increase. A pay rise of 4.2 per cent will take the minimum starting salary for a curate to £14,090.

Mr Jenkins said: "It is something people think about but if you have a calling it isn't the money that matters. As long as you can survive and have a reasonably comfortable life that is enough. You are called by God not by the money. The Church

does its bit to enable them to carry out the ministry through the stipend and the vicarage."

Eric Shegog, director of communications for the Diocese of London, said that the number of deacons ordained in the diocese was up by 25 per cent this year.

"The numbers in training for ordination for the Diocese of London has gone up to 111 from 95 last year. One possibility is that it reflects the increasing interest in spiritual matters within society as a whole. More people are addressing the eternal questions of what life is about."

Second-career priests heavily outnumber theology graduates among applicants for the Church of England. Less than a quarter of people applying to join the ministry were under the age of 29, according to recent figures.



John Carr only became religious in his thirties, but then his calling 'got stronger and stronger'

Tom Pilston

'I felt that I was coming home to the Church'

THE REV John Carr, who was ordained into the clergy at St Paul's Cathedral last Saturday, gave up his career as an ambulance man three years ago in order to devote his life to the Church of England.

Now based at the St Mary of Eton Church in Hackney Wick, east London, the 46-year-old priest said yesterday that he did not become religious until he was in his thirties.

He said: "I started going to church in 1985. My wife had started going but at first I didn't want to know. After I began to settle into the church there was a feeling of coming home. My calling got stronger and stronger."

"When you believe you are called to the C of E you are taken away for three days as part of the selection process. You speak to other priests who test the vocation."

"I wasn't eligible at first because I had been divorced, but the law changed just as I was going forward. All the doors just seemed to open."

After he left his previous job in 1995, Mr Carr began to work as a lay minister at his local church. He trained part-time at the North Thames Ministerial Training College and looked after his two youngest children while his wife went to work.

He believes that priests who

have held jobs in previous professions add a richness to the church. "There was a wonderful mix of people at the college. There was someone who had worked in the building trade, there were teachers, a lawyer, a diplomat - all training together," he said.

Recalling his time in the ambulance service, he says that he spent much of his time listening to his colleagues in a capacity which foreshadowed his life in the ministry.

"I became a befriender. We were trained by Samaritans to listen to other ambulance men. I was someone who was a confidential ear."

Mr Carr, who learnt recently that he passed his course in theological and pastoral studies at advanced level, is proud of the fact that he has successfully completed his studies despite leaving school with no qualifications.

"My education has got an important bearing on everything. I had no education at all. I failed the 11-plus. I left school at 15 with absolutely nothing. Over a period of time I realised I had dyslexia. For me to go to college was extremely daunting."

"It is a success story for someone who had no hope in life to someone who has achieved that."

LINUS GREGORIADIS

Ex-soldier free after causing boy's death

A FORMER soldier who ran his car on to a pavement, killing a schoolboy, walked free from the Old Bailey yesterday.

David Arundel, 48, who served in Northern Ireland, had been convicted by a jury on June 12 of causing death by dangerous driving and received a 200-hour community service order. He denied the charge.

David Burrows, 15, of Cowley, west London, was walking home after an evening out with his friends on June 10 last year, when, at about 9.40pm, Arundel's Nissan mounted the pavement and ran into him from behind, killing him instantly.

The boy's father, Mr Burrows, said outside the court: "The sentence was pathetic. He has taken the life of a 15-year-old boy and has got nothing for it."

"The same judge at the trial said he would get a custodial sentence. He has taken our son's life and he has walked off scot-free."

Judge Anne Goddard, QC, told Arundel, of Marinershill, Blackney, Norfolk: "There are very few cases of this

type) where a custodial sentence is not appropriate. After a great deal of thought, I have come to the conclusion that this is one of them."

"The tragedy of this case is that nothing can put the clock back... there is no sentence which can compensate his parents, who, I am sure, will bear their grief forever."

Arundel, who now works for the Civil Aviation Authority, was driving a Nissan 300 on the inside lane of the dual carriageway on Cowley High Street when another car pulled in front of him, as he approached the lights.

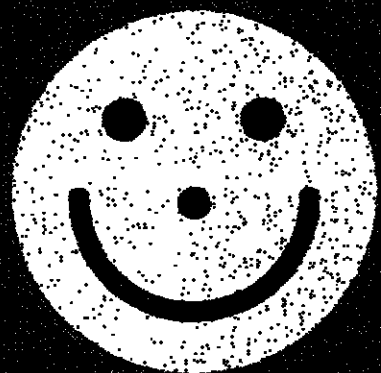
"The bad driving on the part of the other man does not lessen your culpability," said Judge Goddard.

The judge accepted that Arundel, who had a good driving record, showed "genuine and deep" feelings of remorse and appreciated the great suffering of the Burrows family.

The impact speed with which Arundel hit the wall of a house and the victim simultaneously was estimated at between 25 and 40 mph.

Arundel was ordered to pay £2,000 costs.

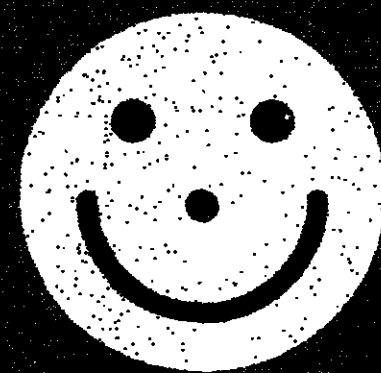
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Breast-screening units in staff crisis



Mammography units face staff shortages as radiologists move to more interesting and less litigious areas of health care

Emma Boom

THE BREAST-SCREENING service for women is in danger of closing in some parts of the country because of a shortage of medical staff, specialists warned yesterday.

The growing threat of litigation and an increasing workload are driving staff away, leaving women at risk of developing undetected cancers. A survey by the Royal College of Radiologists has shown that 83 per cent of consultants working in the units fear that standards will drop and 42 per cent say they are considering giving up.

More than a million women undergo breast screening each year, and the numbers have risen over the past decade as the service has grown in popularity. It is targeted at women aged 50 to 64, detects 6,500 early cancers and saves an estimated 1,250 lives each year.

The survey shows that more than a quarter of the 110 units in the country have been sued by women patients, mainly for having allegedly missed cancers.

Professor Stuart Field, the chairman of the breast group

By JEREMY LAURANCE
Health Editor

committee of the college and a joint author of the survey, said: "Rising expectations and the threat of litigation pose a real threat to the continuation of the programme. We may find people are not prepared to do the work. In certain areas the service may have to close."

There is widespread public misconception about what breast screening could achieve, Professor Field said. "We cannot diagnose all cancers. It is a physical impossibility. At best we can reduce mortality by 25 per cent. That means 75 per cent of women who were going to die of breast cancer will still do so. Some cases will always appear between screens."

He said the £35m annual budget for the screening programme must be increased, equipment updated and more radiologists trained.

Julietta Patrick, the national co-ordinator of the breast-screening programme, said the shortage of consultant radiologists who wanted to work in

breast screening was causing problems. Every mammogram had to be read at least once by a consultant. "If you haven't got one you cannot deliver the service," she said.

However, the key deterrent for most radiologists was the perception that the work was boring. "Over 90 per cent of women who come for screening get an immediate all-clear. There is a perception that radiologists doing breast screening spend most of their time looking at perfectly normal breasts."

Baroness Jay, a Health minister, said staff shortages and low morale were a problem, but pointed out that the Government was working hard to correct those problems.

Speaking on BBC Radio 4's Today programme, she said the Prime Minister had just announced a new health-service modernisation fund to provide better equipment and training, which were particularly needed in radiology. "We want to give staff the feeling that they are really working again for a first-class service," she said.

Fall in cancers proves medical experts wrong

THE NUMBER of new cases of cancer has fallen in Britain over the past five years, much to the surprise of medical experts. They had predicted a continuing rise as the average age of the population increased.

Official estimates of newly diagnosed cancers by the Office of National Statistics show that there were 209,000 new cases in 1997 compared with 219,000 cases in 1992.

The total fall, of about 5 per cent, masks an even more significant decline of 9 per cent in men and 7 per cent in women when changes in the age structure of the population are taken into account.

Cases of lung cancer in men and breast cancer in women - the most common cancers in each of the sexes - show an even more dramatic decline. Male lung cancers fell by 19 per cent and female breast cancer by 9 per cent.

Cervical cancer showed the largest fall, dropping by 26 per cent between 1992 and 1997. Scientists said this was almost certainly due to the effectiveness of the cervical screening programme, which has identified precancerous cases that could be treated before developing into the disease.

Professor Karol Sikora, a medical adviser to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund, said that the figures demonstrate

By STEVE CONNOR
Science Editor

the effectiveness of measures to educate the public in cancer prevention and treatment.

"The figures are fascinating because they show that public health measures do definitely work. The gains may look small in percentage terms but the number of lives saved can be enormous," Professor Sikora said yesterday.

Lung cancer rates in men have fallen because fewer young men are smoking now than a generation ago, and the decline in colon cancer is probably due to the fact that people are eating a healthier, fibre-rich diet with more fruit and vegetables, Professor Sikora said.

The apparent decline in breast cancer, however, may be due to the fact that the screening programme, which began in 1989, resulted in an unusually high number of breast cancers being identified in the early 1990s compared with 1997.

Valerie Beral, Professor of Epidemiology at Oxford University, said the latest figures on new cancers demonstrate that the public health messages of the past are beginning to work.

"There will still be a lot of people with cancer as a result of the ageing population, but this risk has gone down for all ages."

Bass forced to recall its poisoned beer

MILLIONS OF beer drinkers were yesterday being warned to check their cans and bottles after a coolant leak contaminated beer at a bottling plant run by the brewing giant Bass.

The firm is asking customers, including thousands planning to settle down in front of today's World Cup quarter-final games at home, to return the suspect products following the accident at the Cape Hill brewery in Birmingham.

Managers announced the recall on Thursday night of eight million drinks, about half the weekly output at the plant, after 17 customers complained of an unpleasant sweet taste in their beer.

The five brands affected are cans of Carling Premier, Carling's Irish Ale and Worthington Draught Bitter, cans and bottles of Carling Lager and bottles of Tennent's Gold Beer.

A Bass spokesman, Stuart Cain, admitted that the recall during the World Cup had come at a bad time. He said: "There is never a good time for these things to happen but we have been particularly busy. We are asking our customers ... to check their cans and bottles. We are confident only a small number have been affected but we are not prepared to take any risks."

The contaminated brands can be detected by a letter that follows the best-before

By CAHAL MILMO

date on the bottom of the container. Any cans and bottles with the letter F, G, H, J, K, L or M should be returned to where they were bought for a full refund, the brewers said.

Bass stressed that no product other than the brands mentioned was affected. The contamination was caused after coolant, used to keep the beer at a constant temperature during the bottling process, leaked into the produce from a fractured pipe. A section of the Cape Hill plant remained closed yesterday for repairs.

The brewer said that customers would notice at once if they drank from a can or bottle tainted by the chemical, which is only harmful if consumed in large quantities.

Mr Cain said: "People will know after one sip if they have one of the affected cans or bottles, it will have an unmistakable and unpleasant sickly sweet taste. It is difficult to get beyond the first sip. The coolant is only harmful if drunk in large quantities but obviously we want to take the contaminated cans and bottles out of circulation as quickly as we can."

None of the 17 people who had complained about the contaminated beer had been taken ill, the company said.

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Millennium bug threatens to wipe out pension records

ALL TRACE of pension contributions could be wiped out in businesses failing to cope with the millennium bug, a senior Government adviser warned yesterday.

Small and medium-sized companies in particular could face potentially crippling legal action for losing vital information about their employees, she added.

Gwyneth Flower, who leads the Government's millennium

By BARRIE CLEMENT
Labour Editor

bug unit, told *The Independent* that individuals belonging to in-house company pension schemes could find that there was no record of decades of contributions.

Ms Flower, managing director of Action 2000 at the Department of Trade and Industry, warned that pay-

ments to company pensioners might also suddenly be halted after midnight on 1 January 2000 and workers might find that their employer had stopped paying their wages.

Elsewhere companies might fail to make the necessary tax deductions from salaries and employees could end up paying large sums in back-tax. For more troublesome employees, however, there is also the happier prospect of companies losing disciplinary records.

The millennium bug strikes where computers interpret the last two digits in the year 2000 as an order to close down and consequently wipe out files.

A recent survey by Action 2000 found that 80 per cent of the 1.2 million small and medium-sized companies in Britain had done nothing to ensure their information systems were bug-proof. And one in eight declared their intention of taking no action whatsoever. Ms

Flower pointed out that eight out of ten workers were employed by smaller enterprises.

The Government adviser is hoping to set up a meeting with John Monks, TUC general secretary, in an attempt to raise awareness among seven million union members. "I don't want trade unionists to be confrontational, but I would like them to ask their employers if they have prepared for the millennium," she said.

Ms Flower has warned that many firms could go out of business if their systems crash, because bills could remain unpaid and orders not sent out to suppliers.

Action 2000 has recruited bigger companies to the campaign to raise awareness. High street supermarkets, for instance, are asking their suppliers, often smaller companies, to make sure they are not caught out by the millennium.

Ms Flower also intends to embark on an initiative to ensure that school children are aware of the potential problems and can warn their parents. Scriptwriters for the popular television soap operas are also to be recruited to the cause, along with business networks such as chambers of commerce and Training and Enterprise Councils.

Action 2000 is also expected to call on utility companies to

include advice in their communications with households.

Ms Flower believed that Britain was ahead of most countries, including France and Germany, in addressing the problem. "I don't want people to panic, but I do want them to be aware of the pitfalls and make sure their employers are doing something about it. The chances are that there are protective systems in place, but you have to ask the question."

Housing market is fragile, say estate agents

THE RECOVERY in the housing market is so fragile and patchy after interest rate rises, it should not be seen as a genuine recovery at all, it was claimed yesterday.

Estate agents, surveyors and building societies have all poured cold water on the recovery, as fresh data showed prices have dropped in London and are slowing down elsewhere.

A quarterly survey published yesterday by one building society, Birmingham Midshires, showed nearly three quarters of estate agents believe the recovery cannot be described as genuine, while most described it as patchy or non-existent. In the three months to the end of February, only 50 per cent of estate agents were as pessimistic.

Experts increasingly fear the recovery in the housing market may become a figment of the homeowner's imagination.

By ANDREW VERITY

Prices in London actually fell by 1.8 per cent in the three months to May 31 - compared with a rise of 1 per cent in the rest of the country. The average value of a London home fell by £1,940 to £107,960.

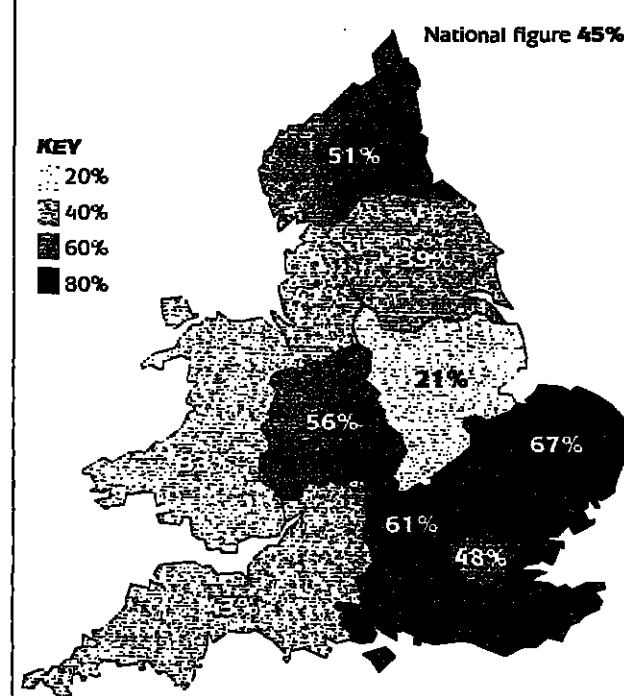
Ian Perry, a housing spokesman at the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS), said: "The familiar north/south divide is very much in evidence. House prices are levelling off quicker in the south than the north, where the market is still buoyant."

The slowdown is most evident in the most expensive areas of London, where it is taking an average of 10 weeks to sell a house as against just seven weeks in February.

The latest data follows a survey by RICS, which showed that rising unemployment and growing numbers of people

MOVEMENT IN HOUSE PRICES

% of estate agents reporting increases in prices by region in England and Wales



wanting to sell have taken the heat out of the rise in prices.

In June - traditionally the high season for selling houses - prices rose by 1 per cent, while prices across the country rose by 5.6 per cent over the last year. First-time buyers paid an average of £52,941.

While these figures are by no means gloomy, Halifax, the country's biggest mortgage lender, confirmed fewer houses were being bought and sold. The number of transactions has fallen by 10 per cent since last year to just 108,000 a month.

According to experts, this makes it much less likely that

a seller can expect a competitive "auction" when a house is sold.

Ian Darby, of mortgage specialists John Charcol, said: "Buyers are chasing property less and people are less prepared to take part in an auction for a house. Our evidence is that the market is beginning to quieten down."

Estate agents say interest rates have had little to do with the slow-down, preferring to blame the World Cup and the impending summer holidays for denting their business.

"It does matter in the housing market. We have seen a number of pretty big distractions



House prices in London are on the way down, according to a new survey

tions going on, such as the footie, and they do have an impact," Mr Darby said.

Building societies say the running down of tax relief on mortgages has also had an effect. Pam O'Keefe, spokeswoman for the Building

Societies Association, said: "Figures do show there is a danger that the housing market is cooling off."

However, fears of a full-blown slump triggering a nationwide fall in house prices may be overplayed, Mike Jack-

son, chief executive of Birmingham Midshires, said: "Although homeowners have taken a knock in recent months, the underlying conditions remain sound."

"Negative equity has been reduced and houses are be-

coming increasingly affordable as a result of rising incomes and employment."

"Whilst we won't see a housing boom in the near future, neither will we see a slump - the overall picture is one of stability."

Carter-Ruck goes to law in tiff with his partners

LEGENDARY LIBEL lawyer Peter Carter-Ruck was yesterday taking legal advice himself after falling out with partners in his own firm.

The 84-year-old solicitor was outraged by a statement issued yesterday announcing that he had retired from Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners, the firm he founded 16 years ago.

Mr Carter-Ruck said that he had not retired and described the announcement as "disingenuous".

The veteran of the civil courts is upset that his name has been removed from the letterhead of his firm's notepaper and relegated to "founder and consultant".

The partners believe this is part of an agreement by which Mr Carter-Ruck will step down, giving up his 18 per cent stake in the firm, while taking a consultancy with a salary of around £60,000 for three years.

Yesterday they issued a press release in the name of Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners "confirming" Mr Carter-Ruck's retirement.

The statement quoted partner Andrew Stephenson saying:

By IAN BURRELL
Home Affairs Correspondent

"It was agreed in March that Peter Carter-Ruck would stand down as senior partner to become a consultant on 1 July. The partners of the firm, with the full support of the staff, hope and expect Peter to honour that agreement."

Mr Carter-Ruck promptly consulted his lawyers and then issued his own press release - also in the name of Peter Carter-Ruck and Partners - describing the partners' statement as "disingenuous".

He stated: "It is they who have not honoured the agreement."

Mr Carter-Ruck, whose roll of past clients includes Cecil Parkinson, Norman Lamont and Harold Wilson, wants to carry on at least until the end of the year in line with the firm's deed of partnership.

In his statement, he added: "It is further incorrect that the partners have the full support of the staff. Two partners have expressed to me their concern over my proposal to leave and others have expressed their



Peter Carter-Ruck, at 84, is not ready to retire yet

name. Yet his is often the name which the rich and famous think of when they believe their reputations have been slighted by less than glowing accounts in print.

Litigation has provided Mr Carter-Ruck, who is an expert yachtsman and a veteran of four Fastnet races, with a generous income. He travels first-class and has three homes: a 17th-century cottage in Essex, a craft in Argyllshire and a flat in London.

Nevertheless he professes that he would rather represent the "underdog" than the rich.

He has said he is distressed by the number of young people sleeping rough on the streets of London and is a supporter of Shelter, the charity for the homeless. He is also a council member of the NSPCC.

Mr Carter-Ruck said last night that, when he does eventually retire, he wants to devote much of his time to writing and doing charitable work.

He said: "I am very concerned about those who I feel are at the bottom of the pile of society who need help."

The end of the world is nigh (again)

ASTRONOMERS ARE worried about the fate of the Earth again. Three months after warning the world by announcing that a huge asteroid would hit us in 30 years' time (a fate which was later rescinded when it was discovered that the asteroid would miss us), they now say they should have been looking in the other direction - towards the Sun.

The worries have been sparked by the discovery of a piece of rock 40 metres wide, floating in the space between Earth and the Sun. Discovered by scientists at the University of Hawaii, the asteroid is one of a new class whose orbit lies entirely within our own, making it

By CHARLES ARTHUR
Technology Editor

difficult to spot against the bright background of the Sun.

Though this one is not worrying, it could signal the presence of larger objects that could have a devastating effect if they struck the Earth. And un-

like the one spotted in March, there would be virtually no warning that they were coming.

Dr David Tholen, a planetary astronomer at the University, said that if the path of such an asteroid intersected with the Earth's orbit, then astronomers who have spent years searching the night sky for threaten-

ing rocks beyond Earth's orbit would be caught unawares by an object approaching from the daytime side of the sky.

The asteroid, designated 1998 DK36, was found by Dr Tholen and a graduate student, Robert Whiteley, using a special camera fitted to the university's 2.2 metre telescope at Mauna Kea, Hawaii.

It poses no serious risk to Earth, because it should pass about 750,000 miles from the Earth's orbit, roughly three times further away than the Moon.

Dr Tholen said: "1998 DK36 is nothing to lose sleep over. It's the ones we haven't found yet that are of concern."

FERGAL KEANE

What David Trimble really needs is the help of Gerry Adams.

— THE WEEKEND REVIEW, PAGE 3

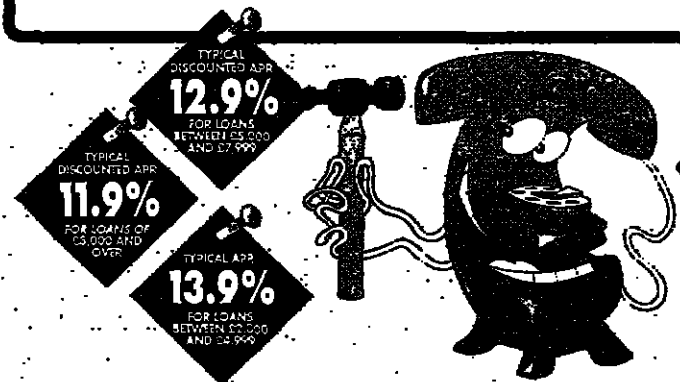
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£2,000	£85.60	£70.76	£58.99	£50.16	£43.84
£3,000	£128.40	£106.14	£88.49	£75.24	£65.76
£4,000	£171.20	£141.52	£117.98	£100.32	£87.68
£5,000	£214.00	£177.90	£147.48	£125.40	£109.60
£6,000	£256.80	£213.88	£176.98	£150.72	£131.84
£7,000	£299.60	£249.86	£206.48	£176.04	£153.12
£8,000	£342.40	£285.84	£235.98	£201.36	£174.40
£9,000	£385.20	£321.82	£265.48	£226.68	£195.68
£10,000	£428.00	£357.80	£294.98	£252.00	£216.96
£11,000	£470.80	£393.78	£324.48	£277.32	£238.24
£12,000	£513.60	£429.76	£353.98	£302.64	£259.52
£13,000	£556.40	£465.74	£383.48	£327.96	£280.80
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صكتا من الاصل

Thousands evacuated as Florida fires rage

THE ENTIRE population of Flagler County in north-eastern Florida, numbering 30,000 people in all, was placed under a mandatory evacuation order yesterday, as forest fires raged out of control through much of the area.

Flames from the fires were blazing only about 10 miles from the Walt Disney World and Sea World at Orlando in Florida, alarming some of the tourists visiting the two theme parks. Officials warned that the parks may have to be closed if firefighters prove unable to halt the advance of the blazes.

According to state officials, three separate fires threatened to converge in one giant conflagration on the town of Bunnell. Police in the town cruised the streets, using loudhailers to order people to leave.

The latest emergency brings to more than 70,000 the number of people evacuating the coastal areas of north-eastern and central Florida, the state known in happier times as the Sunshine State.

Long stretches of the main north-south artery, the Interstate 95, in north-eastern Florida have been periodically closed because of the smoke, and one of the major sporting fixtures of the Independence Day weekend, the international speedway race at Daytona Beach, has been postponed until October. Fires are also raging in the vicinity of Titusville and the Kennedy Space Centre, north-east of Orlando.

The Governor of Florida, Lawton Chiles, said that the resources of the state had been exhausted trying to combat fires that had never been seen on such a scale in Florida. The Governor has banned the private use and sale of fireworks for Fourth of July celebrations, in case they inadvertently contribute to the spread of the fires.

A makeshift camp for refugees has been set up in a car park by a Wal-Mart supermarket near Ormond Beach, and numerous shelters

BY MARY DEJEVSKY
in Washington

have been opened for evacuees. Falls of smoke are now reported to be reaching Miami, more than 250 miles south of the main concentration of fires.

The fires flared up again two days ago after a brief spell of showers appeared to have kept them in check. An estimated 2,000 separate fires are now burning across Florida. Monroe County - comprising the southern island chain of the Florida Keys - appears to be the only county free of flames.

So far, in what is normally the wet season in Florida, almost 300,000 acres have burnt and 125 homes have been destroyed. No deaths have been reported, but more than 50 people have been injured.

The fires have been blamed on an exceptionally long spell of hot, dry weather that has kept temperatures hovering around 90-100F (33-38C). Lightning strikes and even arson have also been blamed.

The fire chief for Ormond Beach told an interviewer: "We don't have a handle on anything, and we're not going to get a handle on anything until we get some kind of tropical rain."

More than 4,000 firefighters are trying to combat the fires, working around the clock with little rest. The state has been promised \$60m (£40m) in federal aid, federal emergency officials have flown in to help co-ordinate the firefighting operations and specialist teams are being transferred from California.

In spite of the promises of aid, a mood close to despair seemed to grip many people in the state yesterday. "There are fires all over," said Charles Spagnola, who had left his home in Ormond Beach as fires came within a half-mile of his house.

"You never know when another is going to start up. It's like sitting on a pile of dynamite."



Firefighters struggle through a wall of smoke on a road near Ormond Beach, Florida. Mark Foley/AP

Dissident sues Adidas over forced labour claim

AN EXILED Chinese dissident living in the United States said he was filing a class action suit against the US subsidiary of Adidas-Salomon AG, accusing the company of using forced prison labour to make footballs in China.

BY MARCUS TANNER

Adidas said earlier this week that it had already stopped orders for the balls which were made in China while it investigated the allegations.

They were first raised last month by Bao Ge, who said he personally had had to manufacture footballs for the World Cup while being held in prison in China.

"We have stopped placing orders in China, but not permanently. We admit something happened and we want to investigate it ourselves," Peter Csanadi, global public relations director for Adidas, said in Paris.

Adidas, exclusive supplier of France98 balls for the World Cup finals, last month assured the world football governing body, Fifa, that it was not producing such balls in China.

The row is, nevertheless, deeply embarrassing for Adidas, and contains echoes of earlier complaints about the conditions of workers making Nike training shoes, and which were widely seen as a contributory factor to Nike's loss of prestige, and in the end, profits.

The Chinese government also joined the argument, denying prison labour had been used to manufacture footballs for the Adidas sports label.

But Mr Bao, a founding member of the Voice of Human Rights in China and who spent three years in a forced-labour camp, and another former political prisoner, Yang Qinheng, are proceeding with a civil lawsuit seeking damages from Adidas for the pain and suffering they endured during the 15-hour days they were forced to work, seven days a week.

"Adidas knowingly used forced labour at the expense of the health and freedom of these Chinese citizens," said Joel Segal, an attorney with the Free China Movement, which announced the lawsuit.

Mr Segal said the group was also launching a boycott of all companies like Adidas that "use slave labour to make their products and sell them here. This is just the beginning."

"We'll continue to sue. We're also working with religious and human rights groups."

He said the Free China Movement, a coalition of over 30 Chinese dissident groups inside and outside China, was also working with US lawmakers to halt China's use of forced labour to manufacture products for Western consumption.

"The American people have no business buying any goods from these unconscionable businesses."

Mr Segal said: "Where's the integrity of these businesses, trying to make a quick dollar from people in involuntary servitude?"

Other former political prisoners, participating in the suit as "John Doe" plaintiffs, are Yao Zhenxian, Han Lifa and Liang Shaokun.

The US State Department estimated in a January report that between 6 and 8 million Chinese were working in forced labour camps.

Mr Segal said the group's next target was the Chinese government's use of forced labour to make coloured light bulbs for Christmas decorations.

The Free China Movement also urged the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to cease granting loans to China until the forced labour camps ceased operating there.

Family survives desert ordeal

AUSTRALIANS were marveling yesterday at the physical powers of endurance of a man who walked almost 125 miles through the desert to get help, while the family members he left behind survived for two weeks by eating lizards and roots and drinking rain from puddles in remote Western Australia.

However, not all members of the family, whose names were not released by the Australian police, survived the terrifying ordeal.

A one-year-old boy died, but four adult members of the

family survived the near-freezing nights and soaring daytime temperatures after their four-wheel drive vehicle became bogged down in sand on the edge of the Great Sandy Desert.

Police said they were amazed by the strength of the man, who on Thursday stumbled on a group of men working on a remote microwave tower situated between the Outback towns of Port Hedland and Broome.

"It really is miraculous that the four survived," Sgt Chris Ferris, of Port Hedland, police

said. "The endurance it took to walk 200 kilometres with the cold, with dehydration and virtually nothing to eat - it's an amazing feat."

The policeman said that when the man eventually found the work crew, he immediately wanted to go back and join the search for his family rather than go straight to a hospital.

Two other members of the family group - a 36-year-old woman and a 74-year-old man - were found yesterday.

Their survival was almost as remarkable as that of the man,

as the elderly man had a pace-maker and the woman was an asthmatic who had run out of medication. In spite of that, they were in reasonable condition, police said.

A ranch owner and a pilot spotted the last survivor, a 62-year-old woman, about 50 miles away.

The woman had an injured knee and had only managed to walk about six miles from the family's abandoned vehicle. It appeared that she had been left behind by the others with blankets and a dog to keep her warm.

The real root of Kohl's problems

NOW WE know who really runs Germany. A careless ministerial remark has flushed out the powerbrokers behind Helmut Kohl's throne, plunging his government into yet another crisis.

With elections less than three months away, and their own fate looking insecure, one might have expected the Free Democrats to concentrate on weightier matters than root fillings. But there seems no more important an issue, and Chancellor Kohl's minuscule but numerically essential coalition partners have declared war on their colleagues.

At stake is the honour of German dentists, offended by assertions that some are inclined to commit fraud. According to Horst Seehofer, the health minister, 30 per cent of dentists' bills are overstated. Earlier this week, Mr Seehofer announced a clampdown to save beleaguered health funds.

The minister based his estimate on a study which established what was already common knowledge: many dentists charge outrageous bills.

The press is awash with examples. The German dental fraternity, paid according to work carried out, has shown great ingenuity in job creation. Amalgam fillings, they de-

BY IMRE KARACS
in Bonn

clared, are dangerous, and must all be replaced by more expensive gold and ceramic. A massive profit on materials is often factored into the price.

Even small jobs can result in painful extractions of banknotes.

There are, of course, many honest dentists who would like to see the image of their profession cleansed. This is what Mr Seehofer is trying to do, but the dentists, who are represented disproportionately among the members and contributors of the Free Democrats, threaten to veto the plans.

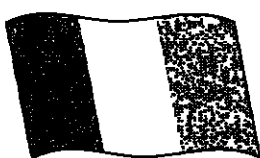
As ministers quarrel, the opposition Social Democrats have come to the aid of Mr Seehofer, a right-winger from Bavaria they normally love to hate. The minister should "stop being led by the dentists' lobby in the Free Democrat Party," suggested the Social Democrats' health spokesman, Klaus Kirscher.

Those contemplating major dental work should meanwhile hold off till September. There is a good chance that, after the elections, the dentists, otherwise known as Free Democrats, will no longer be in government.

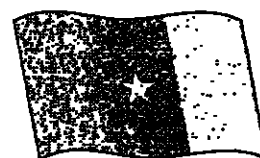
BT's line up for the World Cup.



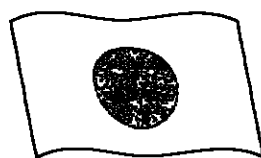
USA from 12p



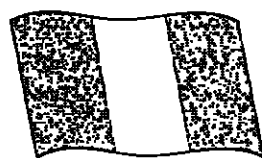
France from 13p



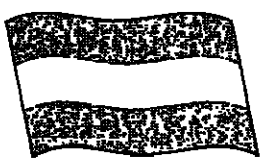
Cameroon from 56p



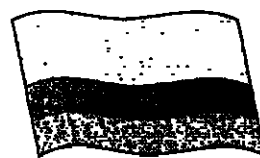
Japan from 31p



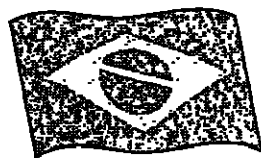
Italy from 15p



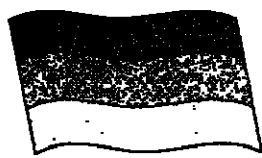
Austria from 19p



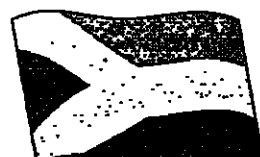
Colombia from 68p



Brazil from 56p



Germany from 13p



South Africa from 38p



Tunisia from 31p

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Mandela falls out with his old Communist allies



Mbeki: defending strategy

SOUTH AFRICA'S Communist Party wound up its 10th annual congress yesterday after a spectacular, and perhaps final, falling-out with its old friends.

Last Wednesday, President Nelson Mandela lashed out at his long-time comrades after his appearance at their conference was greeted by heckles and jeers about the government economic policy.

The Communists were reminded of their manners by the party leadership; it was not right to throw eggs - metaphor-

ically speaking - at an invited guest, they said. But an angry President Mandela barely concealed his anger in his speech to the conference, after apparently tiring of the constant sniping about government policy from the rank and file.

Mr Mandela warned the party to toe the line, or get out of the mighty tripartite alliance linking the ruling African National Congress (ANC), the

Communists and the trade union movement, Cosatu, which was formed in the apartheid era before the country's 1994 democratic elections.

In case the South African Communist party (SACP) had missed the government's message, Thabo Mbeki - Mr Mandela's anointed heir - showed up a day later only to make an even more savage attack. He criticised delegates who had dismissed Mr Mandela's statements as the "rantings of an old man".

Mr Mbeki said he, too, was insulted that the SACP was presenting itself as the real representatives of the masses and the ANC leaders as the traitors and "deadly enemies" of the revolution. "The idea that any of our organisations can build itself on the basis of scavenging on the carcass of a savaged ANC is wrong in the extreme," he warned.

Mr Mbeki delivered a similar broadside against the Cosatu union federation last week, inviting members of the

alliance who no longer believed in its worth to pursue their agendas outside. Cosatu and the SACP know that despite public dissatisfaction with the ANC's failure to improve conditions for the poor, such a break could push them in to the political wilderness.

The rows have put the tripartite alliance under its greatest strain since Mr Mandela took power, and although it is unlikely to break down before the next elections, probably in May next year, there

are questions over whether it will survive afterwards. The strains renew speculation about a viable opposition to the ANC being formed by left-wing elements from within the alliance.

At the heart of the tension is the bitterness in Cosatu and the Communist Party over the government's growth, employment and redistribution (Gear) strategy, which Mr Mandela and Mr Mbeki claim is a realistic approach to the capitalist global economy, but which its partners

consider a betrayal of the people in a country where unemployment is rising, hitting hard at the poor, and the rand is on the slide.

The ANC's partners are urging job-creation and more socialist-flavoured solutions to the country's economic woes. After Mr Mbeki's speech, Jeremy Cronin, deputy general secretary of the SACP, reserved the right to criticise, insisting that the Communist Party did not want to be "lap dogs" to the ANC.

Origins of man: Scientists are gathering in Sun City to debate - heatedly - our true ancestral home



Eve's footprints, seen in detail below, were made 117,000 years ago near modern Cape Town. Dr David Roberts (centre) believes they are the oldest human prints

Kenneth Garrett/NGS/AF

Nigerian sanctions to remain until poll

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

CHIEF EMEKA Anyaoku, the Commonwealth Secretary General, warned yesterday that for all the new mood in Nigeria, sanctions against the country would not be lifted until after proper democratic elections, which now may not be held before the end of the year.

Just back from Lagos, where he held extensive talks with the new ruler, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, Chief Anyaoku - himself a Nigerian - is exultant at the change in atmosphere in the few weeks since the death of former President Sani Abacha, whose brutal rule turned the country into an international pariah.

"What Abubakar has achieved already is remarkable," he said, "the Nigerian spirit has returned."

Very soon, in all probability once the month-long mourning period for General Abacha is over on 8 July, his successor will set out his plans for returning Nigeria to democracy.

This, Chief Anyaoku said, could be when he formally announces the release of 200 remaining political detainees, most notably, of course, Moshood Abiola, winner of the 1993 elections whose annulment lies at the root of the political crisis.

But it now seems certain that Chief Abiola will not return as head of a provisional government of national unity until elections. Instead, as he told Chief Anyaoku this week, he wants to "rebuild his life," not least his business interests.

He also apparently fears that if he demands the Presidency that was stolen from him, other politicians who had lost legitimate mandates would do the same. This might again destabilise the country, offering an opening for pro-Abacha diehards to try yet another coup.

Britain, the Commonwealth, the UN and others like the US appear to agree, though whether Chief Abiola's supporters also agree is less clear.

In the meantime, a country which has scarcely known civilian rule in 38 years of independence from Britain has to create a credible democratic system, virtually from scratch.

Almost certainly, the five pro-regime parties that had backed the sole candidacy of General Abacha to the sham election he was planning in the autumn will now be dissolved. New ones will have to be organised, but with the best will in the world, the elections are unlikely to be held before the end of this year.

General Abubakar himself is most unlikely to run. But Chief Anyaoku believes the current head of state should stay on until the elections. Younger officers who owed their position to General Abacha might feel less obliged to support an uncertain interim Government.

Africa at war over Eve's footprints

IT WAS A surreal setting for a get-together of the world's leading archaeologists and palaeontologists.

In the shadow of the Lost City - the garish, fake "ancient civilisation" which is the centrepiece of the Sun City gambling complex - the world's scientists gathered in South Africa this week to argue about the origins of man and to bitch about "Eve's footprints", the country's latest, high-profile archaeological find.

Last week Eve's feet made international news when the ghostly traces of a 117,000-year-old stroll on the beach were cut from rocks at Langebaan, near Cape Town, and airlifted to a museum for safety. As well as the danger presented by the elements, vandals had been carving their initials in the surrounding rocks and tourists were shoving their feet into the ancient footprints.

Dr David Roberts, the geologist who discovered them, claimed they were the world's oldest homo-sapien prints. Their small size provoked speculation that they were made by a female. Thus the name Eve's footprints.

The publicity, neatly coin-

BY MARY BRAID
in Sun City

ciding with the conference, clearly irked some of Dr Roberts' international colleagues. It was incredible how much worldwide attention a find of no scientific value had attracted, they whispered during breaks behind plastic temple pillars.

"What do these prints tell us?" said Professor Tim White, the eminent US palaeontologist who in 1995 discovered 4.4 million-year-old Ramidus, reputedly the world's oldest hominid (the family to which homo-sapiens belongs), although some experts insist it will eventually prove to be a chimpanzee. "That 117,000 years ago hominids were walking on two legs. So what? We knew that."

Though the prints' dating puts them in the time frame during which homo-sapiens first appeared - 100,000 to 200,000 years ago - Professor White even suggests that another hominid might have made them. The find, he complained, has only emotional value; a useless commodity apparently in the struggle to

"piece together lost and ancient worlds".

Whatever the scientific merits of Eve's footprints, the controversy offers a glimpse of the keen sense of competition which has developed between eastern and southern Africa in the grand detective endeavour to establish the origins of man.

Although the rivalry is played down in public, the delegates privately admitted this week that competition for recognition and research money is fierce.

The modern palaeontologist may wear a suit, but he attacks his rivals with all the primitive aggressive instincts of his distant, hairier ancestors.

South Africa has recently undergone a palaeontological renaissance after years of scientific isolation during the apartheid era. Although the country has contributed 40 per cent of the total fossil hominids found in Africa, until the 1990s east Africa, and in particular Kenya, Ethiopia and Tanzania, was the focus for research in the continent where it is assumed that hominids first appeared more than five million years ago.

The end of apartheid cleared



the way for South Africa to reclaim its rightful place in palaeontology. This week's conference was confirmation that its contribution was again being recognised.

"Under apartheid it was politically incorrect to have anything to do with the fossil men of South Africa," said Professor Phillip Tobias, of the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), whose international palaeontological reputation somehow survived the apartheid era.

"It was politically correct to focus one's sights on east Africa. That is where the books were written and the films were

made. Only since President Nelson Mandela's release have things loosened up."

Professor Tobias, now in his seventies, points out that it was Professor Raymond Dart, his old mentor at Wits, who in 1924 at the tender age of 32 first challenged the prevailing orthodoxy which taught that Asia was the cradle of humanity. This happened after he discovered the fossilised skull of a child at Taung, near Kimberly.

For 25 years Professor Dart was alone in maintaining that the Taung child - 3.5 million years old - was the oldest hominid yet found in the world; and that Africa, as Charles Darwin had predicted, was the continent from which human life had sprung.

He was resolute in the face of rampant prejudice against the dark continent. The Taung child was denied its place on the hominid evolutionary ladder. The tide turned only as south and east Africa yielded many other specimens similar to Taung child - small brained but upright higher primates.

Among its other successes South Africa is also credited with discovering the world's oldest homo-sapien remains

at Klasies Cave, near Cape Town - a much more recent find. Some experts believe that South Africa has the edge on such finds.

Whatever the truth, there is much at stake. Many of those excavating in east and south Africa are toiling away in order to verify competing theories about the evolution of hominids and anatomically-modern homo-sapiens.

Experts who favour the theory that homo-sapiens evolved in one part of Africa, and then dispersed across the globe, argue about whether they appeared first in south or east Africa. Those who believe the dispersal took place before homo-sapiens evolved - at an earlier evolutionary stage - believe modern man popped up rather like a rash at various points all over Africa and the rest of the globe.

Professor Tobias insists the rivalry between east and south Africa can be overplayed and generously points to Professor White as the man most likely to provide a major breakthrough in the near future.

Since 1981, Professor White and 40 other scientists have excavated in Ethiopia, in spite of

recent civil war, to reach the crucial fork in the evolutionary road, about 5.5 million years ago, when chimpanzees and hominids are thought to have parted company. They rely on the unique geological conditions at the northern end of the Great Rift Valley.

In the past few years, Professor White has retraced the hominid's steps a million years further than anyone else. Professor Tobias believes Professor White's team is tantalisingly close to finding the common ancestor of men and chimpanzees. He says: "Some suspect Tim already has the common ancestor but has not announced it yet."

Professor White says Professor Tobias has a great imagination. But he admits a breakthrough may be only five years away. "We are getting close," he says.

"The problem will be whether we recognise the common ancestor when we find him. He will not be a chimpanzee, or a hominid." That he admits, raises the possibility that the team has already found remains of the common ancestor but has yet to recognise him as part of the family.

IN BRIEF

Villagers flee Pakistani guns

HEAVY shelling by Pakistani forces has forced more than 2,000 villagers in Indian-held Kashmir to move to safer areas. Indian officials said many more villagers were likely to leave their homes in Dawar, about 120 miles north-west of the state capital, Srinagar. India accused Pakistan of intensifying its bombardment to focus world attention on the disputed territory.

Croatian martyr

THE Vatican declared Croatia's Second World War cardinal a martyr for the

faith, paving the way for his beatification during a visit to Croatia by the Pope in October. He signed the decree yesterday for Cardinal Alojzije Stepinac, who was a hero to Catholic Croats for his resistance to Communism but was accused by Serbs of sympathising with the Nazis.

Boy killers

TWO Papua New Guinean boys who hacked a woman to death with an axe because they believed she killed their sister through sorcery were sentenced to 15 years' hard labour. Markus Fatale Gae, 12, and Pius Lakoi Totovi, 14, had

pleaded guilty to murdering Bogoloi Loima while she was asleep at Tetuke village, on the south coast of New Britain province.

Cuba defiance

DEFYING the US economic embargo, volunteers led by American clergymen will begin a nationwide drive to gather medicine, food, computers, vehicles and other aid for Cuba. Fourteen caravans will visit 140 cities over the next two weeks, collecting aid that will include two ambulances, six buses and eight mobile libraries to be donated to Cuba, the organisers said.

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Chechen kidnapping: One year on, the rebel leaders are blaming one another for why two Britons are still captive

Broken promises of freedom

Families
take appeal
for action
to No 10

BY THOMAS DE WAAL
in Grozny

"HAVEN'T THEY stolen you yet?" It is breakfast time and Shamil Basayev, Russia's enemy No 1, Chechnya's most famous fighter and now the breakaway republic's acting prime minister, is making a joke. Standing outside the gates of his house in Grozny, in a T-shirt, tracksuit trousers and sandals, the head of the Chechen government was more relaxed than his foreign visitors.

Six months ago Basayev promised to impose law and order on Chechnya by the summer time. He also vowed to free the two British hostages, Camilla Carr and Jon James, who have now spent one year in captivity in Chechnya.

But when he was pressed as to why he, Chechnya's most celebrated warrior, had not won this particular war, Basayev turned evasive. He blamed "Russian special services" and "lack of information" on his lack of results.

Perhaps his evasiveness had something to do with the presence of a man with long black curls standing at the gate. Khatab, as he is known, came from Saudi Arabia to Chechnya to fight a holy war and is sheltering here from accusations of involvement in international terrorism.

Or did Basayev prefer not to remember that he also took hostages - more than a thousand of them - when he launched a raid on the Russian town of Budynovsk during the war with Russia, which the Chechens finally won?

It was hard to look any distance into the murky of strange loyalties and alliances in Chechnya and discern any firm truth. Particularly hard when as a foreigner nowadays you are yourself an object of interest and a potential piece of merchandise. My companions and I came here for just two days, and were taken in an armoured vehicle and escorted always by four armed guards.

We knew Ms Carr and Mr James were somewhere not too far from here, in a mountain hideout or Grozny cellar - but also very far from us, caught up



Members of the hostages' families, with former Beirut captive John McCarthy (centre), mark the anniversary of the capture of Ms Carr and Mr James Andrew Stuart/PA

in the fine web of this strange society. They were seized on the night of 2-3 July last year, as they settled down for the night in a rented house in Grozny. Their two young guards were overpowered and handcuffed and the British couple were taken away into the night.

Beyond the fact that they are still alive, almost nothing has been heard from them since. It is known that they have been moved around the Chechen hills and it is thought likely that they have been sold on from one group to another.

The simple intent with which the pair came to Chechnya jars with the brutal treatment they received. Ms Carr and Mr

James had come to Grozny to work with children traumatised by the war with Russia.

"They were like children themselves, naive as children. The children loved them more than their own parents," recalled Zina and Ramzan, the couple's Chechen hosts. They spoke no Russian and Mr James's ponytail and their exercises immediately attracted attention. "They used to practise their strange faith in the courtyard," said Zina. (The two are Tai chi teachers from the west of England.)

At least one man has made it his mission to set the couple free. Khunkar-Pasha Israpilov runs a concrete building on the

edge of the city called the Anti-Terrorist Centre, devoted to fighting the kidnap gangs and freeing the captives.

Mr Israpilov says his men have twice got close to Ms Carr and Mr James. Once in March, outside the village of Urus-Martan, they fought a skirmish with the kidnappers, and lost one man. But he admitted it was an unequal battle. "Throughout the war, I fought all the time and I did not suffer one defeat against the Russians," Mr Israpilov said bitterly. "I went through a lot of battles, but now it's very hard to fight against these very well-equipped groups. I was better equipped in the war than I am now."

Mr Israpilov's men said they had not been paid for five months. Nor is anyone else in Chechnya. Pensions and salaries are non-existent. Nothing has been rebuilt here since the Russian bombers levelled the city centre.

The poverty and the kidnappings feed on each other. Only three foreign non-governmental organisations are working in Chechnya, because of the security situation. "It's a vicious circle," says Chris Hunter, a colleague of Carr and James, who runs one of the three groups and keeps on working through local staff in schools and hospitals. "Because of the crime, there's no

help and because there's no help, the crime gets worse."

That is why Hunter argues passionately against paying ransoms to the kidnappers, as many Chechens and foreigners have done to get their relatives out. Chechnya will only begin to rebuild itself when the kidnap gangs are vanquished: "These groups have become very well-equipped," said Hunter.

"They've been receiving huge amounts of money, sometimes up to \$2m (£1.2m) for a person. They've got the latest equipment and weapons and vehicles, and unfortunately they've usually got equipment far superior to what the Chechen government has."

On the edge of Grozny, in an old Soviet sanatorium in a fir grove, there are a few meagre reminders of the missing couple: a child's crayon drawing of two beaming faces, with the names "Jon" and "Camilla" inscribed underneath; a hand-written appeal by the children for their teachers to be released.

New classes of children come every week to have music and drama classes as therapy from their memories of bombing raids and battles. In their minds, and in the sad absence of their beloved teachers, the war in Chechnya carries on.

Thomas de Waal is co-author, with Carlotta Gall, of *Chechnya: A Small Victorious War*.

THE FAMILIES of the two British hostages who have been held in the breakaway state of Chechnya in Russia for a year went to 10 Downing Street yesterday to appeal to the Government to do all it can to get the couple released.

Relatives of Camilla Carr and Jon James delivered a letter calling on the Government to pursue all diplomatic means to secure their freedom.

Tony Blair was not there, so they spent 30 minutes speaking to a senior private secretary before going on to a meeting with the Foreign Office minister Baroness Symons.

Ms Carr, 40, from Ross-on-Wye, Hereford and Worcester, and Mr James, 38, of Lydney, Gloucestershire, were seized on 4 July 1997. At the time they were working for the Quaker-affiliated charity the Centre for Peacemaking and Community Development.

On the doorstep of No 10 the relatives released 52 purple balloons, one to mark each week that the couple has been held. The group included Ms Carr's brother, Raj, who had just completed a 170-mile sponsored cycle ride with six of his friends from Ross-on-Wye to highlight the couple's plight.

Mr Carr, 35, from Bristol, said the families were satisfied that the Foreign Office was doing all it could to help his sister and her boyfriend.

He said the letter handed in to No 10 included an appeal for Britain and other European countries not to pay a ransom for hostages. "Emotionally we say yes, pay up and bring them back, but rationally we say no."

He expressed the families' fears when he said: "I would love to be confident [of their release], but we cannot have that kind of confidence in this complex situation. I would love them to be home tomorrow and hopefully they will be back shortly."

Mr Blair has written to the families telling them that the Government would continue to do as much as it could.

Russian war hero is shot dead at his dacha

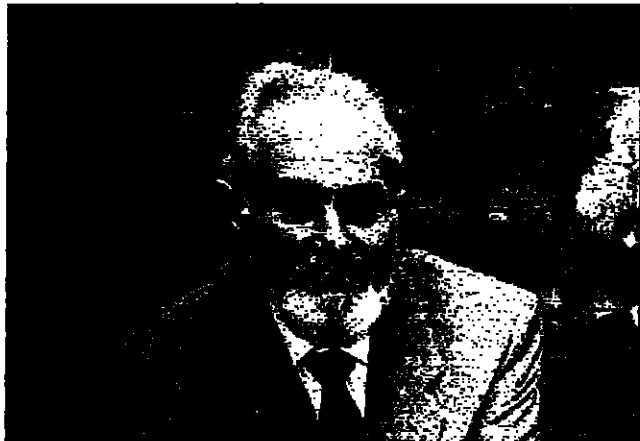
BY HELEN WOMACK
in Moscow

A RUSSIAN general, once close to the Yeltsin regime, but later a bitter opponent of the President, was shot dead at his country cottage early yesterday.

Communist deputies in the State Duma were quick to develop political-conspiracy theories but the independent NTV television channel said Gen Lev Rokhlin's wife, Tamara, was being questioned by investigators after admitting to shooting her husband with a pistol in the heat of a domestic row.

President Yeltsin ordered an inquiry into the tragedy and his spokesman, Sergei Yastrebensky, promised journalists it would be "open and objective". In the immediate aftermath of the shooting, special Omon police and officers from the security services were keeping the media back from the dacha.

General Rokhlin, born in 1947, first made his name in the Soviet Union's ill-fated war in Afghanistan, where he survived a helicopter crash in the mountains. Later he led Russian



General Lev Rokhlin, who was once close to Boris Yeltsin, but later fell out with the President

troops in the storming of Grozny during the war against Muslim Chechnya, which had many parallels with the disastrous adventure in Afghanistan. But he was beginning to have doubts.

When he was awarded the Hero of Russia medal for his operations in Chechnya, he turned it down on grounds that there was nothing heroic about "fighting ones own people". Politically, Gen Rokhlin at first supported the Our House is

Russia movement, led by Viktor Chernomyrdin, Mr Yeltsin's prime minister until earlier this year. A member of the State Duma, the general chaired the parliament's influential defence committee.

But he became disillusioned with corruption in the Army, specifically the sale of Russian arms through the back door to Armenia, which has still not settled its conflict with Azerbaijan over the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh.

After founding his own Movement to support the Army, Gen Rokhlin became increasingly identified with the Communist and nationalist opposition in Russia. He was not as well known abroad as General Alexander Lebed, a likely candidate for the presidential elections in the year 2000, but he was another military man in that tough, no-nonsense mould.

The Duma observed a minute's silence for Gen Rokhlin yesterday before some deputies began casting doubt on his wife's reported admission of guilt.

Viktor Ilyukhin, one of the Communists who would like to see Mr Yeltsin impeached because of Russia's economic crisis, hinted darkly that "certain people around the President are trying to persuade him to crack down to solve our problems and to dissolve the Duma".

But Alexander Kotenkov, the President's representative in parliament, called this slander.

Last night Mrs Rokhlin remained the main suspect in the case.

Belarus rages at bossy West

ALEXANDER LUKASHENKO, the president of Belarus, launched another impassioned attack on the West yesterday, at a parade to mark the former Soviet republic's independence day.

"They want to try and teach us how to live," Mr Lukashenko thundered from a podium in the central square of Minsk, while watching a parade of tanks, rocket launchers and tractors.

His comments were seen as a veiled reference to those Western states that have withdrawn their ambassadors in a bizarre dispute over diplomatic accommodation.

BY LARISA SAYENKO
in Minsk

"Half a century ago someone tried to do this," Mr Lukashenko told thousands in the square, in a speech broadcast live on state television. "Talking to us with force, provocations, blackmail and threats will not be allowed by anyone."

Mr Lukashenko, president since 1994, has vowed to reunite Belarus with its neighbour and former master, Russia.

In an ironic twist, he has scrapped Belarus's post-Soviet independence day which marked the day in 1990 when

the country declared itself sovereign.

Instead, the mercurial leader of Belarus created a new independence day on 3 July, timed to coincide with the date Soviet forces freed Minsk from German troops in 1944.

In Independence Square, tanks and truck-mounted rocket launchers rumbled past the Belarusian leader along with more prosaic trams and tractors, deemed patriotic as they had been made in Belarus.

A surviving statue of Lenin stood regally above a sea of green and red flags in the square. Lines of youngsters

carried portraits of Mr Lukashenko, 43, a former collective farm manager who brooks no opposition in the country of 10 million.

Mr Lukashenko's tough talking won praise from Nevstaliya Kostrova, 76, who watched the parade wearing war medals in true Soviet fashion. "All the good things in this country come from Lukashenko," she said.

Ambassadors from the US and Europe were forced to leave the capital recently after being denied access to the diplomatic compound at Dzozdy on the grounds that it needed repairs.

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Gang warfare casts shadow on Budapest

POLICE IN Budapest yesterday launched a crackdown across the city against organised crime networks to prevent all-out war between the capital's gangs.

The announcement followed the city's bloodiest ever mafia contract killing on Thursday, when a car bomb killed the country's highest-placed police informer and three bystanders in the heart of the prestigious Vaci Street shopping district.

More than 350 police were specifically detailed to stop further attacks and prevent retaliation. Cars on main streets and on motorways leading in and out of the city were stopped at checkpoints and searched for suspects.

The capital was in shock after the car bomb devastated a street only yards from the luxury hotels stretched out along the banks of the Danube, inflicting devastation more usually associated with Beirut or Belfast than Budapest. Windows were shattered 100yards away and nearby cars were turned into blackened wrecks.

Attila Berta, the Budapest police chief, told Hungarian television he feared retaliation from associates of the bomber's target, Tamas Boros, who owned restaurants and nightclubs in Budapest and the Lake Balaton area and had provided valuable information about a fraud case connected with the theft of massive quantities of petrol.

He said: "After Boros's death, the police do not have any more witnesses who know so much about the underworld, the entertainment industry, or who has an interest in oil."

Government and police officials believe the bombing could

BY ADAM LE BOR
in Budapest

trigger a wave of tit-for-tat killings, a nightmare scenario that may ruin Hungary's image as a safe place for foreign investment.

The bomb will certainly damage Hungary's image as a tourist haven. Since the fall of communism Budapest has become one of the most popular destinations in Europe. Tourism is one of the country's principal sources of income.

Budapest's mayor, Gabor Demszky, ordered black flags to be flown on public buildings, while the prime minister designate, Viktor Orban, leader of the centre-right Young Democrats Civic Party, told parliament: "We cannot accept that brutal bomb attacks, murders and robberies become part of our life." Laszlo Kover, the national security minister-designate called for a new law to target organised crime. "Extraordinary situations require extraordinary measures," he said.

The latest car-bomb escalates the turf wars between rival mafia gangs that have plagued Budapest in the past few years. More than 150 bombs and firebombs have exploded in the past 18 months, but until now the majority were targeted against property.

A network of city gangs controls prostitution and the smuggling of drugs and weapons. Turf wars are erupting with increasing rapidity and violence.

The organised crime networks come mainly from the former Soviet Union and from Italy and Turkey. They use Budapest, Prague and Warsaw

as bases for operations in western Europe.

Budapest's position on the edge of the European Union, as well as the massive amount of foreign investment it has gained, makes Hungary a land of opportunity for multi-national criminal networks as well as for multi-national corporations.

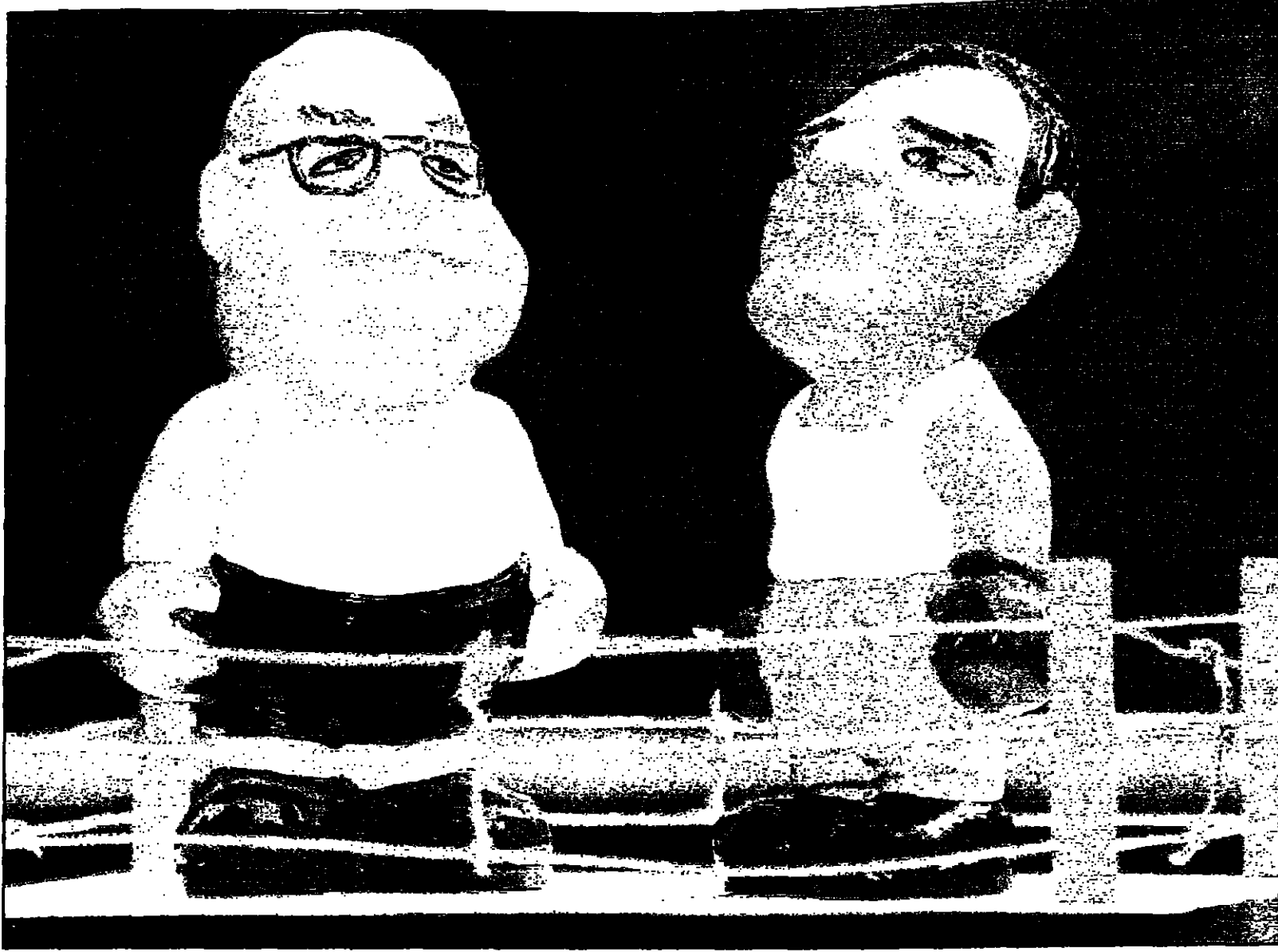
Weapons and explosives are relatively easy to obtain and, as Hungary prepares for EU membership in a few years' time, border controls have become far more lax.

Guns and dynamite are brought in from the former Yugoslavia, which borders Hungary to the south, or from Slovakia in the north. Many bombings in Budapest used Denubit, a plastic explosive manufactured in Slovakia and normally used for mining.

The spread of organised crime in Central Europe has been blamed on the eagerness of the post-communist regimes to be accepted as Western democracies. They have been lax in regulating the new financial markets, hoping that capitalism would take root quickly.

The lack of regulations controlling the massive influx of new money provided an opportunity for international crime networks. Corruption is widespread, often reaching high into government offices and ministries.

It is a sign of Western concern at the spread of organised crime in Eastern Europe that the FBI has opened a college in Budapest to train police across the region in mafia-busting techniques, and to gather and share intelligence on the spread of organised crime.



Salt and pepper pot versions of the German Chancellor, Helmut Kohl (left), and his Social Democrat challenger, Gerhard Schröder, waiting to be installed in a permanent political contest at the German garden gnome museum in Bonn

Serbs break siege of Kosovo village

BY MARCUS TANNER

THE SERB-led Yugoslav army claimed success yesterday in its recent offensive against the Kosovo Liberation Army fighting Serb rule in the province, after relieving a key Serb village that was under siege from the Albanian militants.

Serb troops backed by helicopters entered the village of Kijevo early in the morning, breaking the KLA stranglehold on communications between the province's capital, Pristina, and the western city of Pec, and freeing 100 Serb civilians and 50

police holed up in the village. The Serbs did not let in reporters, so there was no reliable information on casualties.

Serbs and Albanians admitted government forces now hold the road from Pristina at least as far as Kijina - a town that was at the epicentre of the ethnic Albanian uprising against Belgrade's authority in the spring.

But in a sign that the "terrorists", as Belgrade calls them, can still spread their

sphere of operations, the first bomb explosion in Pristina rocked the city centre yesterday. No one was reported injured after witnesses said two men hurled a bomb from a car into a market place.

Residents were shaken also by the sound of detonations and gunfire from the nearby mining complex at Belacevac, where government troops and KLA fighters have been battling for several days for control of the industrial complex. In their boldest action yet, the KLA

walked into the mines earlier this week, only to be driven out by Serbs on Thursday. But yesterday fighting still seemed to be going on.

In another worrying development for the Serbs, five Yugoslav army soldiers who, according to the authorities in Albania, "refused to kill women and children", deserted in Kosovo and were escorted into Albania. They were taken across the border by KLA fighters and turned over to Albanian police. The soldiers were

being taken yesterday to the Albanian capital, Tirana, where they will stay at the mission of the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe.

The soldiers all had Muslim names, which doubtless predisposed them to sympathise to a degree with the predominantly Muslim Albanians. But this was no isolated incident.

Two other Yugoslav soldiers deserted earlier this week. The Serbian media has reported Serbian police refusing to serve in largely Albanian Kosovo.



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صنعت من الامم

Clinton lifts Hong Kong democrats

BY STEPHEN VINES
Hong Kong

Bill Clinton believes democracy will come to China and is confident the government will help "dismantle resistance to it." The President said: "I believe that leaders of vision and imagination and courage will find a way to put China on the right side of history."

He was speaking in Hong Kong yesterday at the close of his nine-day tour of China. Asked to assess the results of the trip, he spoke of agreements on regional security and arms control, co-operation on science and technology and breaking ground on environmental issues. But he believed the part in China of an unprecedented public debate on human rights and other sensitive issues, "might have a bigger impact in the long run than anything else."

The President was given three opportunities to speak directly to the Chinese through television broadcasts and, on one occasion, engaged in debate with China's President, Jiang Zemin, on human rights, Tibet and the development of representative government. Lots of people mentioned to me that it really meant something," President Clinton said. He also plunged into the debate about democracy in Hong Kong during his brief stay in the former colony. He pointedly insisted on meeting only those legislators who had been elected to office by universal suffrage, snubbing the majority who in the May elections were chosen by small groups.

Mr Clinton thus made it clear he supported development of more representative government in Hong Kong. Speaking of the elections, he said: "The results were a mandate for more democracy, not less, and, aster, not slower, strides towards political freedom."



President Bill Clinton in Hong Kong yesterday AP

At a dinner for the US President, Hong Kong's Chief Executive, Tung Chee-hwa, said he was not willing to accelerate the programme of democratic reform, which he envisages changes taking place only slowly. Mr Tung was no doubt annoyed that Mr Clinton went out of his way to hold a private meeting with Martin Lee, leader of the Democratic Party, the principal victor in the last elections.

Mr Lee said the President

listened attentively to his views on prospects for democracy in Hong Kong. "We discussed at length the link between economic prosperity and a credible, transparent system underpinned by democratic elections."

These views won Mr Clinton's endorsement earlier in the day when he addressed the business community. Going to the heart of the argument in China about development of democratic government, he

said: "Some worry that widespread political participation and loud voices of dissent can pull a nation apart. Some nations have a right to worry about instability because of the pain in their past. None the less, I fundamentally disagree."

He was addressing prominent business leaders, some of whom have opposed democratic government. "Freedom and democracy are the birthrights of all people and the best guarantors of national stability and progress," he said.

Despite his emphasis on democracy, the US president has been criticised for not being forceful enough in addressing human-rights violations in China and for refusing to meet dissidents during his stay.

Responding to these criticisms, Mr Clinton argued that he could do more to promote human rights by going directly to China's leaders and by taking part in a public debate while in China: "We believe this unprecedented debate would lead to new advances". Mr Clinton said that he had learned that the best way of approaching the rights issue was to raise it "directly, forcefully but respectfully".

The President appears to have established a strong rapport with his counterpart, Jiang Zemin. He described Mr Jiang as a man of "extraordinary intellect and extraordinary vision".

Mr Clinton's aides were almost euphoric about the success of the trip. They believe the President has shown the United States can make a real impact on human-rights issues in China, while encouraging Asia's largest power to play a constructive role in security and economic issues.

There is, as Mr Clinton admitted, still disappointment on some trade issues, mainly revolving around gaining access to China's markets.

The day I met the President

A WEEK IN THE LIFE OF

Gu Shubang, general manager of the Portman Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Shanghai



Couples dancing opposite the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, Shanghai, where Bill Clinton is staying Greg Baker

were amazed too. Because this was very straight-forward, very open communication," she said.

Canada, Thailand, Hong Kong and the Philippines.

"ON MONDAY, I was in the office about seven in the morning. We just went through the whole thing again, to make sure. Because everything has to be ready for the secret service inspection before the arrival."

"That day I was in the final stage of wrapping the present for the First Family. The box we used was a handmade box, and it was wrapped with silk. After that I was in my office, taking calls from everybody - White House staff, communications agents, the US consulate, the secret service, the Shanghai government, foreign affairs, public security."

And then there was the "Edible Expression of American-Sino Co-operation", a sculpture of a dragon and a US presidential seal made from 20lb of chocolate and 10lb of sugar. Some official spotted that the American flag in it was higher than the Chinese one. A hasty demotion was arranged.

Finally, just after 7pm, Mr Clinton's cavalcade arrived.

"Wow, that was very, very, very huge. I was in the lobby area and they were preparing this line of welcome for the President and someone said, 'Mary you've been asked to greet the President'."

"I think the most unique thing is when you see all the vehicles coming into the centre and they walk through the revolving door. First it's the military people and then the President and First Lady. And that's when the emotion really gets you - wow, really, there they are, here they come."

"The best moment was when I shook his hand, or actually the best moment was when I was told I was to greet the President. That was very, very exciting. We shook hands, we took photos. I'm going to send mum a photograph for sure."

WITH THE First Family in residence, Mary spent most of Tuesday and Wednesday in her office. "We also have a lot of press here as well. And the media centre was very close to my office. When you walk past that room you will see all those people that you usually see on TV, like on CNN. They are right there having lunch or having a discussion and that was kind of exciting too."

TERESA POOLE

EARLY ON Thursday morning, Mary's extraordinary week comes to an abrupt end when the President sets off for the airport at the crack of dawn. "I did not see him go. I was in the office that morning, because we had a lot of other things to do." Does she have any plans to live abroad? "I would think working in Shanghai is probably more exciting than any other place," said Mary. And exhausting too. "It's been really a long week," she smiled.

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Business & City Editor, Jeremy Warner
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BUSINESS

Nationwide faces vote defeat

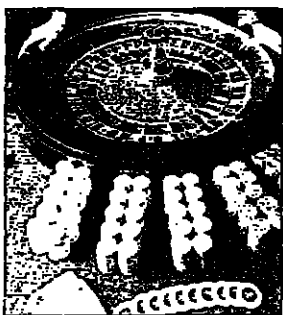
BRIEFING

Setback for National Power

NATIONAL POWER, the energy group, yesterday lost another round in its long-running dispute with United Gas over a take-or-pay North Sea gas contract.

A High Court judge ruled that National Power, which is suing United Gas, owned by the US group, for £20m, was in breach of contract when it refused to disclose to the gas company details of a number of deliveries. However, the court ruled that the breach of contract was not material and therefore the termination of the contract by United Gas was not valid. The court will decide next week whether United Gas should pay for the gas it received.

Funds join in gambling lobby



gambling taxes, are or have been major investors in the shares of two leading London casinos, London Clubs and Capital Corporation.

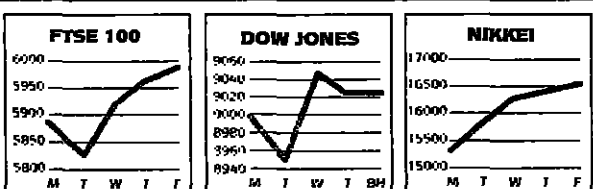
More opposition to ISA proposals

THE GOVERNMENT was yesterday urged to back down on plans to give its own stamp of approval for Individual Savings Accounts investing in funds which track the stock market. Autif, the trade body for the unit trust industry, warned that savers would blame the government if they bought a tracker fund meeting its standard and then suffered a stockmarket downturn.

Phillip Warland, director general of Autif, said: "People who are reassured by the standard will lose when markets go down. They will be told: 'Why didn't you read the small print?' But the whole point of having [a government standard] is that you don't have to read the small print."

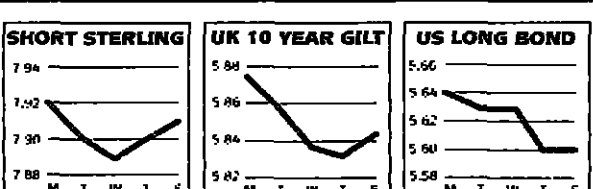
Autif's warnings follow predictions from a deputy chief executive of the Personal Investment Authority that the Treasury's proposals could result in a "mis-buying scandal". The government ended a consultation on the proposals yesterday.

STOCK MARKETS



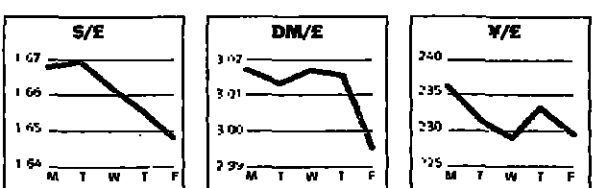
Index	Close	Change	52 wk high	52 wk low	Yield (%)
FTSE 100	5988.40	-28.20	6150.50	4382.80	3.85
FTSE 250	5585.70	-27.40	5970.90	4384.20	3.51
FTSE 350	2881.00	-13.70	2940.10	2141.80	3.79
FTSE All Share	2806.57	-12.72	2872.04	2106.59	3.76
FTSE SmallCap	2604.50	-2.80	2793.80	2182.10	3.21
FTSE FTSE100	1439.80	-3.00	1517.10	1255.20	3.33
FTSE AIM	1027.00	-2.20	1146.90	565.90	1.16
FTSE EBL00	1073.64	9.55	9.50		
Dow Jones	9025.26	-23.41	9261.91	6971.32	1.58
Nikkei	16511.24	39.66	20698.67	14488.21	0.93
Hang Seng	8639.31	-226.85	16820.31	7351.68	4.74
Dax	5953.16	49.06	5980.30	3487.24	2.70

INTEREST RATES



Index	3 month	Yr chg	1 Year	Yr chg	10 year	Yr chg	Long bond	Yr chg
UK	7.88	0.81	8.00	0.50	5.84	-1.21	5.40	-1.59
US	5.69	-0.09	5.81	-0.31	5.41	-0.90	5.60	-1.03
Japan	0.61	-0.03	0.64	-0.18	1.64	-0.94	2.17	-0.88
Germany	3.56	0.43	3.86	0.59	4.73	-0.87	5.30	-1.12

CURRENCIES



Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Dollar	1.6480	-0.0020	1.6535	Dollar	0.6068	+0.29p	0.6048
Mark	2.9956	-2.10p	2.9249	Mark	1.8184	-0.32p	1.7530
Yen	229.51	-0.18	191.82	Yen	135.30	-0.23	114.43
£ index	107.30	+0.20	103.50	£ index	113.20	+0.70	102.30

OTHER INDICATORS

Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago	Index	Close	Chg	Yr Ago
Brent Oil (\$)	12.07	0.04	18.12	GDP	114.80	3.00	111.46
Gold (\$)	294.75	0.90	325.25	RPI	163.50	4.20	156.91
Silver (\$)	5.34	-0.18	4.65	Base Rates	7.50	6.50	

www.bloomberg.com/uk SOURCE: BLOOMBERG

TOURIST RATES

Country	Rate	Country	Rate
Australia (\$)	2.5965	Mexico (nuevo peso)	13.54
Austria (schillings)	20.56	Netherlands (guilders)	3.2977
Belgium (francs)	60.44	New Zealand (\$)	3.0745
Canada (\$)	2.3689	Norway (krone)	12.58
Cyprus (pounds)	0.8527	Portugal (escudos)	298.28
Denmark (krone)	11.22	Saudi Arabia (rials)	6.0393
Finland (markka)	8.9450	Singapore (\$)	2.6711
France (francs)	9.8176	Spain (pesetas)	247.91
Germany (marks)	2.5381	South Africa (rand)	9.9870
Greece (drachma)	490.82	Sweden (krone)	13.09
Hong Kong (\$)	12.46	Switzerland (francs)	2.4788
Ireland (pounds)	1.1603	Thailand (bahts)	61.74
India (rupees)	64.76	Turkey (liras)	428240
Israel (shekels)	5.6221	USA (\$)	1.6204
Italy (lira)	2897		
Japan (yen)	226.55		
Malaysia (ringgits)	6.5356		
Malta (lira)	0.6341		

NATIONWIDE, the largest remaining building society in the UK, was yesterday facing the possibility of an embarrassing defeat in the highly publicised vote to defend its mutual status.

The society's 4.5 million members, are being balloted over proposals to move towards immediate de-mutualisation. Voting so far is believed to be almost evenly split.

More than 1 million votes are already thought to have been cast, ahead of the same point last year, when a total of 1.3 million members took part in elections to the society's board.

Then, a group campaigning for the society to seek a stock market listing, which included Michael Hardern, a freelance butler, were trounced by a seven to three majority. This time, it

BY NIC CICUTTI
Personal Finance Editor

is thought both branch-based and postal ballots are split between the pro and anti-flotation camps.

Moreover, Mr Hardern, who is standing again on a pro-flotation ticket, together with Andrew Muir, a recruitment consultant, are both thought to be running neck-and-neck with rival candidates in favour of retaining Nationwide's mutual status.

If Nationwide loses the ballot, the result will be a crushing blow to the high-profile campaign by its chief executive, Brian Davis, to keep the society mutual. Analysts believe it would also increase pressure on other large building societies, including

Bradford & Bingley, Britannia, Yorkshire, Portman and Coventry, to merge and seek a stock market listing, or prepare to be taken over by larger financial institutions.

A spokesman for Nationwide yesterday refused to discuss the result of the vote ahead of an official announcement next month.

"Our primary concern at present is to encourage as many people as possible to use their vote, no matter what views they hold," he said. "It may be that there are some people who believe that after last year's ballot, when candidates in favour of de-mutualisation lost so heavily, there is no need for them to cast their votes again."

Three similar resolutions, each raising the issue of a stock market flota-

tion, are being voted on, with the deadline for votes on 21 July, barely three weeks away. Each resolution requires only a simple majority to be passed, although it would then be for the new Nationwide board to act on them and put any further proposals to members.

A formal resolution on de-mutualisation would need a majority of 75 per cent or more among the society's savers and 50 per cent or above from its borrowers. However, it is understood that if the outcome of the current ballot is in favour of de-mutualisation, Nationwide's board will open talks with a number of potential suitors with a view to be taken over.

This measure would be partly aimed at convincing many of the society's wavering 1 million borrow-

ing members to vote in favour of any board proposals. They are the ones who could have the most to lose from a flotation if it led to raised home loan rates, as some experts predict. At present, Nationwide's decision to retain variable interest rates for home buyers at up to 0.85 percentage points below those of its rivals gives its borrowers a saving of up to £35 a month on a typical £60,000 loan.

Nationwide's ballot has become one of the most hotly contested in the history of the building societies movement. More than 100 MPs, most of them Labour, recently put their names to a motion pledging support for mutualism. Last year's vote was greeted with support by the Prime Minister, Tony Blair.

Liberty in shake-up after loss of £11.5m

LIBERTY, the struggling department store retailer, warned of likely job cuts and an impending financial restructuring yesterday as it reported a £11.5m loss, a suspension of the dividend and a radical overhaul of its cost base.

The announcement forced Liberty shares to their lowest price since 1987: they fell 25p to 195p. The company is now worth just £44m.

The company, which is best known for its flagship mock-Tudor building on London's Regent Street, is planning a shake-up of its merchandise which will see it reduce its exposure to tourist spending and increase its relevance to Londoners.

"We are a London landmark

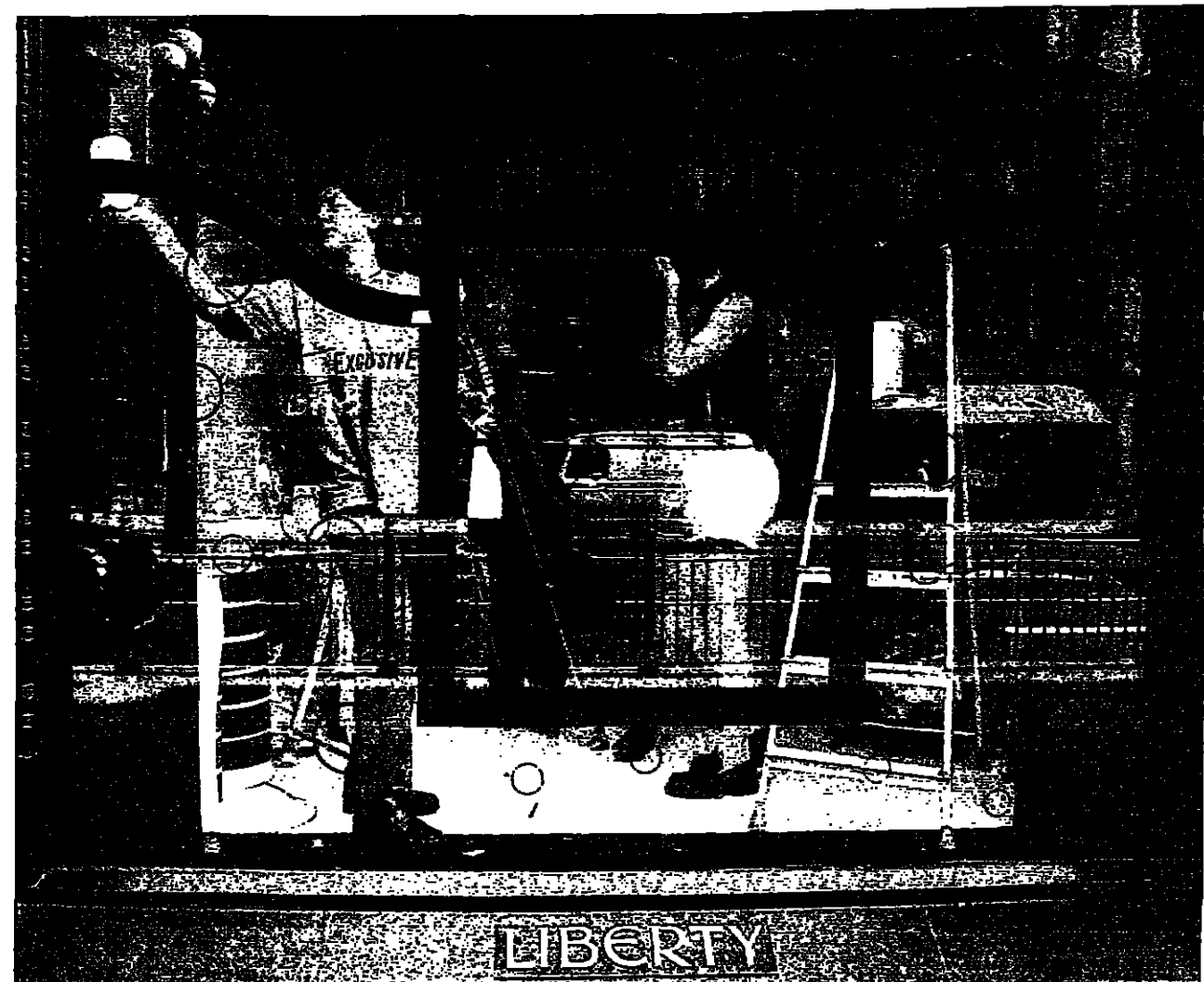
BY NIGEL COPE
Associate City Editor

and we are happy to be on the tourist route," said Michele Jobling, the managing director. "But we need to focus more on the customer and make the offer more consistent."

Staff were told of the redundancies yesterday morning by the new board which took over from the previous chairman, Denis Cassidy, who was ousted in a boardroom coup earlier this year. Liberty employs 600 staff, and although no figure has been placed on the possible cut-backs, the job losses could be substantial.

The new management blamed the company's weak position on the previous board and its attempts to spend £43m on redeveloping the main Regent Street site. The overhaul has the backing of the Stewart-Liberty family, which controls nearly 30 per cent of the shares and which instigated the boardroom shake-up.

Odile Griffith, the family's financial adviser who is now on the Liberty board, said: "It is regrettable that we are having to take this action now. The state the business is in, it should have been taken earlier." She said the Liberty family was "very



Liberty's store in Regent Street, London, may form part of a property sale-and-leaseback to raise new funds

supportive of the current board".

Costs associated with early stages of the redevelopment and other fees resulted in a £10.9m exceptional charge in the current year's accounts. This was in addition to the £500,000 loss incurred by the underlying business.

Ms Jobling said the board would complete its strategic review in September. Fresh funds will then be sought, either through a rights issue or by the raising of new debt facilities. Liberty has a £20m facility in

place, provided by Barclays.

Philip Bowman, the new chairman, may decide to leverage the company's valuable property portfolio, possibly through a sale and lease-back. As well as the freehold of the Regent Street store, Liberty owns a number of retail and residential units in nearby Foubert's Place.

Mr Bowman said Liberty needed to address its cost base, which was far too high for a company of its size. He pointed out that Liberty's costs-to-sales ratio was 42 per cent com-

pared with an industry average of 27 per cent. The company had failed to reduce its central costs following the closure of its provincial branches, he said.

Trading in the first 19 weeks of this financial year has continued to be subdued, with retail sales 2.3 per cent below the same period last year.

The economic turmoil in Far Eastern markets has affected tourist spending at the London store. "There is little likelihood that these [tourist numbers] will recover in the short term," the company said. "Manage-

ment is therefore seeking to promote the store more effectively by targeting potential customers who live or work in central London."

While this initiative is unlikely to involve a dramatic shift in merchandise, it will lead to a change of emphasis, the company said.

Mr Bowman said relations with the founding family were good. "It is a lot easier having them around the boardroom table than having them outside. The relationship is working extremely well."

Shell pulls out of bid for Russian oil group

SHELL, the Anglo-Dutch oil giant, yesterday dealt a major blow to the Russian government's privatisation programme when it pulled out of a \$1.6bn (£970m) bid for Rosneft, Russia's last state-owned oil group.

Shell's surprise move is expected to trigger a spate of withdrawals by other Rosneft bidders, with BP the only other non-Russian company in the running, expected to pull out in the next few weeks.

In a statement yesterday, Shell said it was withdrawing from a consortium including the Russian utilities Gazprom and Lukoil because the financial turmoil in the country would force it to pay for most of the bid.

It also said rock-bottom oil prices would limit the financial

BY FRANCESCO GUERRERA

returns from the takeover and did not justify a bid. The price has fallen by 46 per cent in the last year. In March it touched a 12-year low of \$11.90 a barrel.

The withdrawal of Shell is the second blow to the Russian government's plans to sell off 75 per cent of Rosneft. In May the authorities cut the offer price from \$2.1bn to \$1.6bn because it had received no bids.

Shell's group was widely seen as the favourite, but without the financial backing of the Anglo-Dutch company it cannot win.

Gazprom, the world's largest gas company, has said it cannot invest in the bid. Its finances were dealt another blow on Wednesday when the government ordered it to quadruple

tax payments to meet arrears.

The collapse of the Shell-led bid cast a doubt over the intentions of BP which is bidding with Uneximbank of Russia. Yesterday BP declined to comment, but oil analysts said it would not be surprising if the British group decided to pull out over the next few weeks.

They noted that at the end of last year BP bought a 10 per cent stake in Sidenco, another Russian oil company, for \$571m, and added that in the current climate of low oil prices, it would be wary of spreading itself too thinly.

A withdrawal by BP would leave only a number of Russian consortia to bid for Rosneft. Shell shares closed down 2.5p to 425.5p, while BP shares shed 10p to end at 900p.

Tie Rack slumps on third profits warning

BY NIGEL COPE

TIE RACK, the struggling retailer run by Roy Bishko, issued its third profits warning in a year yesterday and announced that two directors are to leave the board just nine months after they were appointed.

The company said sales in the first half had been disappointing and it had been left with large quantities of unsold stock which would have to be heavily discounted.

Mr Bishko, the chairman, blamed the latest setback on the strong pound and the Asian financial crisis. He said demand in several major markets, including the UK, was showing signs of weakness.

The group's first half will be substantially below expectations, the company said. Tie Rack's broker, CSFB, has cut its

full-year forecast to break-even, with a £3m to £4m loss at the interim stage.

The warning knocked 27 per cent off Tie Rack's shares, which closed 23p lower at 59.5p. At these levels the company is worth around £30m.

Asked if he might seek to take the company private, given that the business is now worth that sum, Mr Bishko said: "I haven't any comment on that."

The two directors who are leaving are Brita Eickhoff and Ronnie Flax. Ms Eickhoff, joint managing director with responsibility for buying and merchandising, has taken leave on grounds of ill health. Mr Flax, joint managing director with responsibility for operations, is to

leave with immediate effect "to pursue other interests".

Mr Flax was on an eight-month contract and will be in line for a pay-off of around £80,000. Martin Morgan has taken on Mr Flax's responsibilities pending a new appointment. A new head of buying has been recruited from Marks & Spencer.

Mr Bishko denied he was overly dominant on the board, which has no chief executive and only three executive directors. "Look, I started this business 17 years ago. It is not about titles. The business is run in a consensual manner."

Isabelle Payet, retail analyst at Sutherland, said: "I don't see the group turning around and having better sales trading for quite some time."

AROUND THE WORLD'S MARKETS

LONDON

SHARES TENDED to drift in the absence of any direction from New York, closed for Independence Day, with Footsie ending 38.2 points higher at 5,988.4. The supporting FTSE 250 index was up 27.4 to 5,585.7. The market took some heart from the survey of the services industries which encouraged the view that interest rates will remain unchanged after next week's MPC meeting. The Japanese Government's plans for tax reforms also helped sentiment.

Derek Pain, page 19

TOKYO

THE JAPANESE stock market was mixed as dealers were torn between disappointment at the plan to close insolvent banks and hints by Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Prime Minister, that he would call for tax cuts.

The Nikkei 225 rose 39.66 points (0.24 per cent) to 16,511.24. However, the broader Topix index fell 2.10 points to 1,268.36. The market gyrated after Mr Hashimoto said he expected tax reform rather than temporary tax cuts.

RUSSIA

THE EXCHANGE staged its sharpest rise in 12 days after measures for a crackdown on tax-dodging companies and on writing the budget were passed - both were key factors for securing the approval of an IMF loan.

The benchmark RTS index rose 4.9 per cent to 151.33. Gazprom, the world's biggest gas company, rose 21 per cent after it agreed to pay more taxes. The index was boosted by the Duma's decision to approve new tax rules and a code of rules for writing budgets.

SWEDEN

SWEDISH shares ended slightly higher in thin trade, with the summer holiday in full swing and the US closed for the Independence Day holiday.

Attention focused on car maker Volvo after it denied that it was in merger talks with Volkswagen. The all-share general index closed up 0.73 per cent at 3,771.66: the OMX 30-share index was up 0.96 per cent at 797.84. Volvo shares closed down three crowns at 257 after its denial of the VW reports.

HONG KONG

THE MARKET ended sharply lower yesterday amid concerns that Japan's plan to shut insolvent banks will not be enough to pull Asia out of its economic slump.

The Hang Seng index fell 226.85 points, or 2.6 per cent, to 8,639.31. "Many people are finding it hard to see a light at the end of the tunnel," said Lisa Chow, fund manager at Guinness Flight Hamro Asia. Bank group HSBC fell 2.1 per cent to HK\$100.50, and Sun Hung Kai Properties plunged 5.1 per cent to HK\$33.70.

صكتا من الالاحل

Investment can't be kite-marked

MOST PEOPLE would recognise the British kite mark. Originally introduced in the 1920s, that distinctive little circle with a kite in the middle has proved a surprisingly durable symbol of product quality and excellence. For a fee, the British Standards Institution continues to test for compliance in design and reliability with an independently defined set of standards. And although now under siege from other international benchmarks, the kite is still the most widely recognised badge of reliability for some products – most famously the condom.

During the shortages of the Second World War and the period of austerity that immediately followed it, a much more contentious attempt was made to benchmark products for public consumption. This was the so-called "utility standard". It was never entirely clear what a product had to do to deserve this stamp of government approval, but the idea was that the badge, which bore a marked resemblance to the kite mark, would be a symbol not just of quality and reliability, but of value too – not necessarily the cheapest or the best, but something the masses could rely on as a solid and reliable buy. Despite the obvious drawbacks of utility standards, I guess that in the context of its time and



JEREMY WARNER

What is the Government up to in exploring whether to introduce a quality control symbol on savings?

with so many spivs around, it must have seemed a reasonable enough initiative. Times change. Now that markets have captured the commanding heights of the economy, the concept of utility marking – though not kite marking – would rightly be regarded as pretty much anathema. It

is not up to the state to define good and bad value; people will decide that for themselves. In a properly competitive market place, moreover, best value will always rise to the top. Utility standards would distort that process by perpetuating products long after they have ceased to be the most attractive on offer.

So what is the present Government up to in exploring whether to introduce some kind of quality control symbol for its forthcoming individual savings accounts (ISAs)? The formal consultation on this came to an end yesterday and some heated responses it has prompted too. What the Government is proposing is somewhere between a kite mark and a utility standard – CAT marking, the letters standing for cost, access and terms. In other words this is an attempt to ensure the product complies not just with a minimum set of investment standards, but that it is compliant on cost and a whole bunch of other much more subjective measures too.

Furthermore, so as to make the process manageable, the Government is proposing to confine CAT marking exclusively to tracker funds – investment products that attempt to mirror exactly the performance of the market. Actively managed

funds, which charge more and attempt to outperform the market, would be excluded. To repeat the question, then, what on earth does the Government mean by this?

The intellectual justification for CAT marking of investment products is that the market in financial services is not a properly competitive one. Rather it is one characterised by hard sell, limited consumer choice, sharp practice, excessive charges and poor value. This may be overstating the reality a bit, and it may also, as the industry insists, be an outdated view, but it is certainly the public perception after the great pensions mis-selling scandal of the late 1980s. That view was given added voice this week by the Consumers Association, which publicly accused the industry of being a "rip off". Allegations like this call for drastic, almost wartime, measures, it can be argued.

There's an odd paradox here, for Britain's financial services industry is among the most developed and innovative in the world. You would therefore expect it to work as much for the interests of consumers as salesmen and shareholders. Plainly it does not in many instances. Too often the intention seems to be to blind the

consumer with complexity and science. Excessively costly and poorly performing products have managed to secure a position in the market quite out of proportion to their value and worth. All too often customers are led through ignorance or wilful disregard for their interests into buying inappropriate and financially disadvantageous products.

We have to be a bit careful with our strictures here, for in a sense that is the purpose of all business – not to "rip off" the purchaser as such, but certainly to persuade him or her to part with as much money for as little pay-back as possible. However, there's obviously a higher public interest in ensuring customers get a fair deal when it comes to their savings and pensions than there perhaps is with a pint of beer or even a motor car. Furthermore, making an informed choice with financial services requires a much higher degree of sophistication and knowledge than it does for most ordinary consumer products.

So is not the Government justified in pursuing this route? It's one thing to accept the case for doing it, quite another to construct a sensible way of carrying it out. Just imagine what would have happened had the last government backed its advertis-

ing campaign to persuade us all to buy personal pensions with an official stamp of approval. The taxpayer would now be shouldering £15bn in compensation payments. The Government can stress that CAT marks are no guarantee of investment performance until it is blue in the face, but it won't stop people believing they are.

Moreover, the attempt to limit this stamp of approval to tracker funds is divisive and unfair. A lot of actively managed funds are indeed grossly expensive for the mediocre or worse investment performance they achieve, but some are not. To deprive them of access to this huge new pool of potential savings would be a distortion of the market. In the long term, and if repeated in other investment products, such as the Government's proposed new stakeholder pension, the effect might also be to distort capital flows away from higher-risk, capital-hungry companies and into the already over-inflated stocks of our major corporations.

The solution to this problem is not in CAT marking, but in transparency and the publication of easily compared lists of charges and investment performance. Defining good value is too complex a problem for governments to be trusted with.

Siebe rogue trades spice up the action

FOR A little while Footsie stood above 6,000 points. But, as is so often the case, it lost its way without the stimulant of New York.

With Wall Street closed for the Independence Day holiday, the London market did little more than go through the motions. In quiet, uneven trading the blue-chip index more or less wandered 28.2 higher to 5,988.4. It last closed above 6,000 three weeks ago.

With trading volume relatively thin – Tim Henman at Wimbledon was the major counter-attraction – there was every chance the order book would produce thrills and spills, distorting the overall picture. It did not disappoint. Engineer Siebe ended at 1,215p, up 3p. Yet thanks to the vagaries of order-driven trading there were afternoon deals – surely errors – at 1,120p.

One of the older Footsie constituents had the distinction of leading the pack. The P&O shipping group – the full name is still the old fashioned and unwieldy Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Co. – gained 38p to a 928p peak following a meeting with analysts. It seems a number of them, impressed by the cruise operation, could be tempted to increase profit forecasts for this year which are around

£460m. About £530m has been pencilled in for next year.

Telecoms were again on form. Orange, the mobile phone group, had another up-lifting session with the shares rising a further 28p gain to 709p following the encouraging subscriber figures.

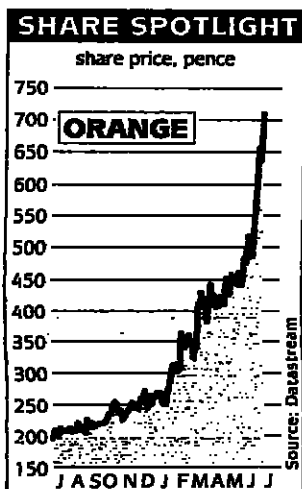
Securicor, which has not shared fully in the telecoms euphoria, showed signs of making up ground. The shares edged forward 19p to a 530p peak with questions again being asked about its long-term involvement in Cellnet, where it has 40 per cent of the capital.

BT, which sits on the remaining 60 per cent, is known to be keen to take full control.

MARKET REPORT



DEREK PAIN



Such a move could, however, encounter monopoly problems. BT rose 6.5p to 771.5p and Cable & Wireless 10p to 800p. Vodafone put on 8p to 827p and even Iona, where there is talk of corporate action, managed a 3p gain to 40p.

Colt Telecom hardened another 55p to 2,725p and cable group Telewest Communications 13.5p to 164.5p.

Racal Electronics, due to float its telecom business, continued to recover from a losing run, gaining 16.5p to 371p. Recently Henderson Crosthwaite suggest the telecoms business should enjoy a market value of £875m; Racal's capitalisation is around £1.1bn. The plan is to float 25 per cent of the telecoms side.

Thames Water's excursion to buy 242,631 shares caught the market on the hop, pushing the shares 35p higher to 1,100p. The utility has already announced its intention of returning capital to shareholders through a "B" share buyback scheme.

Billiton, the mining group, fell 2.5p to 129.5p with its upbeat profits statement giving way to worries about the large line of shares which is thought to hover. Dresdner Kleinwort Benson is believed to have stock on its book, some say as much as 50 million shares, following the sale by a South African insurer of part of its stake.

DKB paid around 155p; it got rid of some, but the weakness in the Billiton price has hindered any further sales.

Supporting shares had a better session with the mid cap index, up 27.4 at 5,585.7, continuing its recovery and the small cap adding 2.8 to 2,604.5p.

Two of the middle ranking oil companies stirred as CSFB offered buy advice. Cairn Energy, which has slipped from 552.5p as hopes of rich Bangladesh deals have failed to materialise, firmed 8p to 286.5p, and Hardy Oil & Gas added 0.5p to 210p.

The investment house believes the two groups have fallen too far and put a 375p target on Cairn and 275p on Hardy.

Disappointing results from Liberty, the Regent Street store, lowered the shares 25p to 195p and The Rack's third profits warning cut the price 22p to 59.5p. A warning from SCI Entertainment prompted a 46p fall to 82.5p.

Watermark Partnership, a firm of consultant engineers, also warned the market about profits – but its message was that estimates were too low. The market was looking for around £1.2m against £1.1m. The shares jumped 12.5p to 55p.

Minorplanet put on the day's best display, gaining 35 per cent to 182.5p. The shares were 45.5p in January. An up-

beat trading statement and an alliance with GE Capital, the American financial group, have prompted interest in the vehicle management systems group. The Americans are taking a stake in Minorplanet as part of a cash-raising exercise; they will have to option to take their interest to 25 per cent over the next three years. "The deal provides huge potential for Minorplanet to get its systems into GE's cars, vans and vehicles," said Richard Slape, analyst with Charles Stanley. GE has a fleet of around 1 million vehicles.

SEAQ VOLUME: 730.8m

SEAQ TRADES: 53,138

GILTS INDEX: n/a

which failed to win the necessary 75 per cent majority.

The Oliver family opposed the deal in the belief that it would further dilute its holding of around 12 per cent of the company. Other members of the consortium may well have had plans to break up the company, whose share price has been trading well below the net asset value of 69p a share at the end of the last financial year.

The rights issue, which needed

only a simple majority of votes in favour, now will go ahead, offering investors one new share at 25p for each share currently held.

The board believes this will have the same effect as the original plan, because a number of investors will not take up their rights, and new investors, including Wolverine, the American company that makes Hush Puppies, will be able to buy shares in the market.

But the need for two attempts to

raise the funds will increase the costs of the issue from around £600,000 to £860,000, and have in effect reduced the net proceeds of the fund-raising exercise by about £260,000.

The cash will be used to accelerate a £17m refurbishment programme to refurbish all the group's 280 stores from the dozen or so a year that could be financed out of cash flow alone to as many as 50 a year.

The stores drank nationally under

the name Oliver & Timpon, and there is a budget chain which trades as Shoeright.

The shares, which plunged to 23.75p after the failure of the initial fund-raising proposal, were unchanged yesterday at 29.5p, which values the entire company at £7.5m. Trading in the new shares, nil paid, will start on Monday.

In the year to the end of January, the group lost £1.84m before excep-

tional items.

By 2 July, Green said, it had received acceptances in respect of 0.78 per cent of Trafford Park. Trafford continued to advise shareholders to reject the bid. Trafford Park shares closed down 5p at 186.5p.

Slower services fail to ease rate fears

BY LEA PATERSON

THE PACE of expansion in the UK service sector has slowed for the fourth consecutive month, according to a survey released yesterday.

However, the City is still nervous about the prospect of another interest-rate rise next week, with analysts saying there was still evidence of inflationary pressures in the economy.

The latest Chartered Institute of Purchasing & Supply (CIPS) report on services says that a combination of the strong pound and last month's interest-rate hike hit both business levels and business confidence in June. But although the pace of growth slowed, overall activity levels were higher in June than in May. More than 20 per cent of companies reported rises in workloads last month, almost twice as many as reported declines.

Adam Cole, economist at HSBC Securities, said: "Growth in services may be slower, but it's not slow enough. The absolute level of activity is simply too high to be consistent with the inflation target."

Services employment grew strongly in June, as did wages. CIPS said: "The need to offer higher rates of pay, both to attract new staff and retain existing employees, was again linked to skills shortages and the tightness of the services labour market, particularly for IT jobs."

The Bank of England's rate-setting Monetary Policy Committee attaches considerable weight to labour market developments. The strong growth in average earnings was a key factor in last month's decision to raise interest rates by 0.25 points to 7.5 per cent.

ABN Amro said: "While the MPC will welcome the additional evidence of a slowing domestic economy, pay pressures in the service sector will continue to exercise them."

The MPC rate-setting meeting begins next Wednesday. Its decision will be announced at midday on Thursday.

Yesterday, sterling closed at just below DM3, down more than a pennig, suggesting that interest-rate fears subsided slightly following the publication of the CIPS survey.

Most economists said that next week's rate decision would be a close call. Several said rates were more likely to go up in August.

Ken Watret, economist at Paribas, said: "The central case is another 0.25-point rise, but it is not 100 per cent certain. I would say the chances are stronger than 50/50." Martin

Brookes at Goldman Sachs said: "The MPC may simultaneously face calls for higher and lower interest rates. It is likely to steer a middle path, leaving rates unchanged for a prolonged period lasting well into next year."

The CIPS's main index of business activity fell from 56.9 in May to 55.4 in June, meaning that the pace of growth slowed in services. However, a reading of more than 50 shows that the sector is expanding.

The seasonally-adjusted employment index rose from 55.7 in May to 56.3 in June, the highest since last August. The seasonally-adjusted index of input prices – which includes salaries – rose from 57.0 in May to 57.6 in June, while retail prices rose only slightly. Companies said competition deterred them from passing cost rises on to consumers.



Peter Middleton's City career has been unorthodox

Middleton to leave Salomons

BY LEA PATERSON

PETER MIDDLETON, chief executive of Salomon Smith Barney in Europe, is to step down at the end of this month after two and a half years at the helm. Mr Middleton, who is 58, said he had not yet decided on his next career move.

Mr Middleton left months after Travelers Group, Salomon Smith Barney's parent company, said it was to merge with Citicorp of the US in an \$140bn (£94bn) deal. Mr Middleton, who called his parting with Salomons "absolutely amicable", said he was under no pressure and had announced his intention to go some months ago.

A spokeswoman for Salomon Smith Barney said his resignation was announced internally on Thursday.

Mr Middleton's appointment at Salomon Smith Barney Eu-

rope – then known as Salomon Brothers Europe – surprised the City. Mr Middleton, then chief executive of Lloyd's of London had no previous experience of investment banking and his career had been somewhat unorthodox. Mr Middleton, an avid fan of football and motorcycling, was once a monk, and later ran Thomas Cook, then a subsidiary of Midland Bank.

Staff at Salomons are struggling to come to terms with a series of mergers and acquisitions. Last autumn, Salomon Brothers was taken over by Travelers, forming Salomon Smith Barney. In April, Travelers announced plans to link up with Citicorp. In June, Travelers said it would take a stake in Nikko, the Japanese bank.

Ailing SA rand falls to new lows

SOUTH AFRICA's ailing rand ended a bruising week at fresh lows against the world's major currencies, as sentiment was dealt a blow by another round of commercial bank interest rate hikes. Analysts said there were no signs that the currency would win a respite next week.

Yesterday, the rand was trading at 6.38 to the dollar – a 10 per cent fall on the week which brought its losses to more than 30 per cent so far this year. Earlier in the day it touched a new

low of 6.43 to the dollar and 10.6322 to sterling.

"I have not seen volatility like this in my career. It has been extremely volatile this week," said Willie Potgieter, director of Standard Bank's foreign exchange division, adding that he expected the volatility to continue next week.

"The underlying problems are still there... particularly because we haven't seen the yen

recover, the trend will probably continue next week," he said.

Fragile sentiment was dented further after three of South Africa's big four retail banks announced another round of prime lending rate hikes – the third since 11 June when they stood at 18.25 per cent.

The extent of the rand's depreciation since a speculative attack on the currency began seven weeks ago has led economists to start drawing com-

parisons with the run on South-east Asian currencies in recent months. On the Johannesburg Stock Exchange, shares shrugged off the gloomy sentiment and focused attention on the benefits rand weakness could offer companies that provide a hedge against the currency by deriving earnings from dollar-priced exports. The All Share index added 1.2 per cent to 7,004.

Reuters.

Cassidy wins vote for Oliver shoe group rights issue

BY CLIFFORD GERMAN

DENIS CASSIDY, the former chairman of the Regent Street store Liberty who now runs the Oliver group, yesterday won approval from shareholders for a rights issue to raise £5.5m to finance the refurbishment of more of the group's shoe stores.

Shareholders at an extraordinary general meeting in Leicester voted 12.45 million to 7.5 million in favour of the rights issue – a majority of 61 to 39. The vote defeated a coalition including the Oliver family

interests led by former chairman Ian Oliver, a consortium of Swedish investors led by Peter Gyllenhamer, and a number of local businessmen with interests in the shoe trade who had opposed the plan.

In May this year, the coalition had banded together to defeat an earlier proposal to raise £5.7m through a combination of a placing to bring in new investors and an open offer,

which failed to win the necessary 75 per cent majority.

The Oliver family opposed the deal in the belief that it would further dilute its holding of around 12 per cent of the company. Other members of the consortium may well have had plans to break up the company, whose share price has been trading well below the net asset value of 69p a share at the end of the last financial year.

The rights issue, which needed

only a simple majority of votes in favour, now will go ahead, offering investors one new share at 25p for each share currently held.

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Trafford bid

Green Property yesterday extended its hostile £145m bid for Trafford Park Estates to 17 July, adding that it would not raise its offer unless another company launches a rival bid. Ireland's Green launched its share offer of 46 Green shares for every 100 Trafford shares held with a cash alternative of 190p per share for the UK property group in May.

By 2 July, Green said, it had received acceptances in respect of 0.78 per cent of Trafford Park. Trafford continued to advise shareholders to reject the bid. Trafford Park shares closed down 5p at 186.5p.

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SPORT

Truth is, Banks just can't resist a good line

I'LL SAY one thing for Tony Banks. He's the Minister for Sport. And I'll say another thing. He's entertaining. In the po-faced world of sports administration, Labour's high-risk man-of-the-people is unable to ignore temptation. The truth is, he just can't resist a good line.

At a press briefing this week, Banks spoke about the prospects of success for the reconstituted United Kingdom Sports Council under its new chairman, Sir Rodney Walker, a man who was brought into this particular arena a couple of years ago by the Tory government. Banks was adamant that the new arrangement would work just fine. "A lot of people said we weren't going to get on, didn't they? But..."

After both Walker, and the Secretary of State for Culture and Heritage, Chris Smith, had talked their

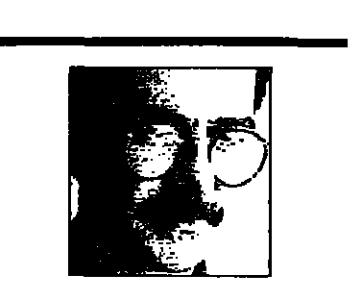
way around the reason why the body New Labour had inherited from the previous government had to be revamped - Walker spoke of a "lack of focus", Smith talked about taking a "clear-eyed look" at the situation - it was Banks who told it like it was. The Council as it had operated until now, he said, resembled nothing so much as a baronial gathering where all appearance of agreement fell apart as the gathered ones returned to their individual fiefdoms. A classic pattern of ineffective bureaucracy, in fact, and Banks made it vividly comprehensible.

One of the most entertaining things about Banks is to witness his inner struggle as he attempts to reconcile dull duty with his impulsive nature. He taps his pen on his papers, and does well for a while, giving a game impression of the way

Sports Ministers behave as he talks about "the UK dimension" and the need for consensus. But the tension is building. The boredom indicator is flickering at its maximum. Nature will out.

What makes Banks' indiscretions especially welcome is the fact that they occur within a context of increasing news management. We're not just talking about Alistair Campbell and Peter Mandelson here. Even Banks' sphere of operation, sport, is choked up with it.

In March, I turned up with about 50 other journalists for a Chelsea Football Club press conference on the eve of their appearance in the Coca-Cola Cup final. On the following Thursday, Chelsea were due to play in the European Cup-Winners' Cup. And on no account, said the club official organising the



MIKE ROWBOTTOM

proceedings, must any questions be directed to players about the following week's European match. This was a Coca-Cola press conference, with Coca-Cola hoardings on the walls and Coca-Cola mobiles hanging from the roof. Questions

only about the Coca-Cola Cup final please.

Presumably, if any player had been asked, either directly or indirectly, to comment upon the mid-week match, their brief would have been to hold up crossed fingers to the questioner as if warding off Dracula.

There were one or two attempts by reporters to get around the embargo which prompted yellow cards from the Master of Ceremonies - and on this occasion no one felt it was worth while incurring a red one.

But things cannot always be managed as easily. At the 1994 Winter Olympics in Norway, the American media were worked up into a feeding frenzy over the meeting between Nancy Kerrigan and the rival ice-skater accused of sanctioning an attack on her, Tonya Harding.

On the eve of their competition, Harding gave a press conference at which she attempted to limit discussion to ice-skating. At this time, the issue of the alleged attack was of sufficient interest in the States that when a reporter hacked into the Olympic messaging system to see what was in Harding's file, leader columns were written across the country discussing the morality of the occurrence.

After a sequence of prepared questions and answers - "The media attention is great but I wish it could focus on other wonderful athletes who are here" - the strait-jacket began to give at the seams under pressure.

"We are here to talk about skating," Harding's coach interjected. Harding herself had prepared a three-stage line of defence. Firstly:

"I am here to follow my dream." If that didn't work, then: "This is a beautiful country." Still no good? Then here was the stopper: "That is not an appropriate question."

"What," an American questioner asked, "is going on inside you, Tonya?"

For a moment it seemed as if he had crept under the wire. "I think that I need to be really strong, that I need to focus on what I need to do and to follow my dream." Oh well. Worth a try.

As a last attempt, someone tried this: "Tonya, would you have come here if you had given the go-ahead for the attack?"

You already know the response that received. What, I wonder, would Tony Banks have replied in the same situation? But then, that really isn't an appropriate question.

To finish off a rugby union tour of record-breaking defeats England take on the mighty Springboks

Clarke brightens a bleak scenario

BY CHRIS HEWETT
Rugby Union Correspondent

BACK IN the dark days of apartheid, the average Springbok enthusiast would do pretty much anything to obtain his fix of meaningful international rugby. Six years on from the end of isolation, South Africans are still scratching around for some Test activity worthy of the name, not because their politics continues to make pariahs of their sportsmen, but because the game in Britain and Ireland no longer stacks up against the strength and professional know-how of the southern hemisphere.

It is a bleak scenario made bleaker still by the prospect of another heavy English defeat at Newlands this afternoon. However well Matt Dawson and his men perform in the shadow of Table Mountain - and there have been occasions, albeit briefly, on this God-awful trip when the red rose has blossomed - they are still likely to be swept away by an avalanche of boulder-sized Springboks who have no appreciation of the concept of sporting mercy. The Boks are the best side in the world right now, the English a mixture of second and third-stringers. A miracle is not on the agenda.

This is not the real England, any more than last week's shambling Welsh side was the real Wales. But the stark facts are there in the record books never to be erased. England leaked 76 points in Brisbane and, despite much improved performances in terms of guts and desire, shed more than 100 points in two Tests against the All Blacks. Wales conceded 96 to the Boks, who also gave the pugilistic Irish what for on the hard terrain of the high veldt. And the Scots? A 50-point downer in Fiji requires no illustrative comment whatsoever.

Strange as it may seem, the powerbrokers of the southern hemisphere are the ones suffering the panic attacks. Rupert Murdoch, the walking bank account behind every major rugby match now played in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, did not pay millions to broadcast mind-numbing mismatches, and there is a very real worry in these parts that the "Dirty Digger" will soon start digging elsewhere.

Hence the almost desperate appeals to England to put on some



Josh Lewsey: 'It's been a difficult tour but I've taken a tremendous amount of experience from it.' David Rogers/Allsport

Lewsey passes initiation

JOSH LEWSEY suspected he had been lured into one of those humiliating rugby induction ceremonies involving eight pints of lager and a feather boa, but as the ringleader appeared to be none other than Clive Woodward, the England coach, he felt he had no option but to acquiesce. "Welcome to Twickenham, Josh," smiled Woodward as the young stand-off joined the tour squad prior to departure for Australia. "Now take off your top."

Lewsey need not have feared for his dignity. Woodward had long identified him as the fittest pound-for-pound player in his party and was keen to promote him as a state-of-the-art professional. "That," said the coach, pointing to a muscular frame straight out of a Sylvester Stallone movie, "is the sort of body I expect to see on an international sportsman and unless we all get ourselves into shape, we can forget about competing with All Blacks and Springboks."

Chris Hewett talks to the new England fly-half who made a large impression, in more ways than one, on the All Blacks

If all this sounds disturbingly voyeuristic there is no questioning the fact that at 21, Lewsey has set new physical standards by meeting a superbly conditioned New Zealand outfit on their own terms. His explosive tackle on Jonah Lomu during last week's second Test in Auckland was merely the most visible manifestation. Close in amid the fire and fury and flying boots, he repeatedly stopped the Thine Randells, Josh Kronfelds and Mark Mayer-hoffers dead in their tracks.

"It doesn't take Charles Atlas to work out that there is a gulf between the southern hemisphere nations and ourselves in terms of pure conditioning," said Woodward, who saw talented but under-developed stick insects like Alex King blown away by the Bullworker brigade from Down Under. "I consider Lewsey one of the big successes of this tour: one of the guys we were looking to blood with next year's World Cup in mind. Why has he been able to stack up where others have failed? You only have to look at him to find the answer. He's fit. End of story."

It goes without saying that Lewsey did not stumble across his body beautiful by accident. "I would have been about 14 when I first started taking my personal fitness seriously," he says. "I boxed a good deal at one stage and because of that, I beefed up substantially. When all my mates in the lower sixth were out on the town pissing it up, I was leading a different sort of life. I enjoy a good time as much as the next bloke but I realised early that if you want to get the most from your sport, you have to put a bit in."

There is, however, rather more to Lewsey than an impressive set of bench press figures, which is really just as well given that rugby matches are still decided on a rectangle of grass rather than a clanking, clanking pec-deck machine. He can pass a ball as well as push weights, beat an opponent one on one as well as beat a bleep test. He also has more self-confidence than he knows what to do with. "I know

where I want to go and I know how to get there," he says cheerfully. Born in Bromley and educated at Watford Grammar, he accepted an offer to read physiology at Bristol University, a strong rugby academy, in 1995. By sharp coincidence, given what would happen three years down the road, he found King blocking his way to the No 10 shirt. "I got a game at full-back, which was fine, but I'd always seen myself as an outside-half and I was impatient to get on with it. I found it quite hard to accept, actually."

Almost as soon as the professional game took hold in England, he was on the phone to Bristol, the local First Division club. "Yes, I phoned them rather than the other way round. Why? Two reasons. I very much wanted to play senior rugby and at the same time, I wanted to earn some money doing it. I figured that if I could negotiate myself some sort of contract, my parents wouldn't have to keep forking out for my studies."

"I made my Bristol debut as a stand-off against Auckland, of all people, and I still regard that night as one of the best of my life. We lost 64-28 but it was the full Auckland side baring a couple, and to face someone like Carlos Spencer at such an early stage in my senior career was something else."

Lewsey eventually fell out with Bristol in comprehensive fashion - "I signed a two-year deal with them

Wales plan provincial future for new coach to inherit

THE SEARCH for a new Wales coach has come down to a three-man short-list, with the appointment of Kevin Bowring's successor set to be finalised in the next few weeks.

The worldwide scouting mission has included interviews with coaches in New Zealand, Australia and closer to home, with Terry Cobner, the Welsh Rugby Union director of rugby, declaring yesterday: "They are coaches of the highest calibre. We will be landing someone extremely acceptable to the people of Wales. The quality of the man will accept the challenge and not be in it for financial reasons."

The new coach will have South Africa as his first hurdle, at Wembley on 14 November, and will take up his post around a month after the Springboks' recent record 96-13 defeat over Wales in Pretoria.

In the wake of that humiliation Cobner is preparing a paper to put before the Union's general committee containing his thoughts on how to help restore Welsh rugby. It will include the WRU gaining control of the contracts of the top players and coaches and the top players congregating at either three clubs or three provincial sides for top level competition.

"The current club structure does not meet the needs of international players," Cobner added. "Push has come to shove and we are fed up with Wales being humiliated on the international field. We have to be prepared to do something about it."

"The game must be re-built around three expanded clubs or provinces and the rest of the game in Wales should revert back to its amateur status. These clubs or provinces then must play regularly at the highest level in Europe, Britain or a northern hemisphere Super-12 style competition."

Willie John McBride, who captained the Lions to a series victory over South Africa in 1974, has joined in the criticism of the Home Nations, branding northern hemisphere rugby a "shambles".

McBride, the president of the Northern Irish club side Ballymena, who are currently touring South Africa, said in Johannesburg that he does not understand why recent tours by England, Ireland and Wales went ahead. "The northern hemisphere sides weren't ready for the professional era," McBride said. "They did not adapt as well as South Africa, New Zealand and Australia."

Wales and Ireland (33-0) were humbled by the Springboks, while England were humiliated by record scores in Australia and New Zealand, and face the Springboks today.

"The British sides went about things the wrong way. South Africa, New Zealand and Australia contracted their top players," McBride said. "In the UK, the players are contracted to the clubs. The clubs are telling the union what to do. It is a crazy situation."

McBride also criticised the "crazy money" being paid to players by their clubs. "The clubs say they own the players. While players would like to represent their countries, they are more likely to stick with the clubs who pay their salaries. There will have to be a change in attitude at a higher level but it will take another five or six years to sort out."

"The experience of all the Home Nations' sides this summer must make all realise we cannot carry on as we are. We are fed up with seeing Wales humiliated on the international field. There is opposition to change in Wales everywhere although everybody recognises the need to change."

SOUTH AFRICA V ENGLAND			
at Newlands, Cape Town		Bath	
P Montgomery	W Province	15 M Perry	Richmond
S Terblanche	Boaland	14 S Brown	Northampton
A Snyman	N Transvaal	13 N Seal	Sale
P Muller	Natal	12 J Baxendale	Worcester
P Rossouw	W Province	11 P Sampson	Worcester
H Honiball	Natal	10 J Lewsey	Worcester
J Van der Westhuizen	N Transvaal	9 M Dawson	Northampton, capt
R Kempson	Worcester	8 G Rowntree	Leicester
J Dalton	Gauteng	7 R Cockerill	Leicester
A Garvey	Natal	6 P Vickery	Gloucester
K Otto	N Transvaal	5 R Fidler	Gloucester
M Andrews	Natal	4 D Sims	Richmond
J Erasmus	Free State	3 B Clarke	Sale
A Venter	Free State	2 P Sanderson	Saracens
G Teichmann	Natal, capt	1 A Diprose	Saracens

Replacements: 16 M Handre (Boaland); 17 S Strauss (Gauteng); 18 W Swaneepoel (Free State); 19 B Aldrich (W Province); 20 B Skirrah (W Province); 21 G le Roux (Natal); 22 H Dreyer (Free State).

Replacements: 16 T Sington (Leicester); 17 S Brown (Gloucester); 18 S Ojo (Gloucester); 19 S Ojo (Gloucester); 20 B Skirrah (Worcester); 21 W Green (Worcester); 22 P Greening (Gloucester).

Kick-off: 4.15 (Sky Sports 1)

Referee: C Hawke (New Zealand)

PUNTERS' GUIDE

Mid-season siesta for Shahtoush

SHAHTOUSH, THE winner of the Oaks, will miss her intended engagement in the Irish equivalent at the Curragh a week tomorrow. Connections of the Aidan O'Brien-trained filly have decided that she needs more time to recover from her classic exertions and will now aim her at the £170,000 Yorkshire Oaks next month.

Likely to join Shahtoush on the Knavesmire will be her stablemate Saratoga Springs who is having a mid-season break after running unplaced in the French, Epsom and Irish Derbys in the space of four weeks. He will be targeted at the Juddmonte International.

The track has brought out the best in the son of El Gran Senor before, with victories in the Ascot Stakes last August and the Dante Stakes in May. O'Brien still has Star Begonia and Kitz in the Irish Oaks, but running plans will be subject to the Curragh going, currently given as yielding.

Whoever lines up is sure to

face formidable opposition as Godolphin look set to supplement Bahr - runner-up to Shahtoush at Epsom - for the race at a cost of £25,000. Any such decision must be made by noon on Monday but Crisford said yesterday: "Bahr has taken her Epsom race very well and at this stage is an intended runner in Ireland."

John Oxo's Winona, third in the Coronation Stakes last time out, could provide the best chance of the home team retaining the crown which Oxo secured last year with Ebadiyia.

Bolshoi and Diktat were yesterday supplemented at a cost of £15,000 each for Thursday's July Cup at Newmarket. Jack Berry is aiming for his elusive first Group One victory with Bolshoi, who landed the King's Stand Stakes at Royal Ascot.

But no King's Stand winner has followed up in the Newmarket contest since Never So Bold in 1985, with eight horses (including five favourites) beaten in the attempt since.

BEVERLEY

HYPERION

2.00 Blackpool Rock 2.30 Mazed 3.00
Newbury 3.30 River 4.00 Majalis 4.30 Spa
Leam 5.00 High Regard

GOING: Good. STALLS: Inside.

DRAW ADVANTAGE: High best 5f but when ground is soft low are favoured.

High-hand, galloping course with very soft 5f.

Courses 2m of town on A49. Beverley station 2m. ADMIS-
SION: Club £10; Ladies £5; Children £2.50. Silver Ring £2 (10-12); Course Enclosure £2 (10-12); Picnic area £2 or £2 per car, plus £2 per occupant. CAR PARK: Free.

LEADING TRAINERS: M. Johnson 25-28 (21%), J. Berry 25-28 (23%), D. Loder 15-25 (50%), M. J. R. 15-28 (21%), J. Berry 25-28 (23%), D. Loder 15-25 (50%), M. J. R. 15-28 (21%).

LEADING JOCKEYS: L. Chalkley 11-14 (63%), A. Cuthbert 10-15 (63%), R. Cordero 9-14 (25%), T. Williams 6-7 (60%).

FAVOURITES: 22-25 (57%).

BLINKERED FIRST TIME: Penny Factors (200).

2.00 ANDY COMFORT & LARA KING SELLING STAKES (CLASS D) £3,000 2YO 7f 100yds

1. BLACKPOOL ROCK (11) J. O'Neill 8.11. W. Suple 15
2. FERRY FACTORS (11) J. O'Neill 8.11. R. Cordero 15
3. BIRTHDAY J. R. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
4. LUTHER (11) J. O'Neill 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
5. LUTHER (11) J. O'Neill 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
6. REBEL TIGER (11) R. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
7. WHO'S NOBLE T. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
8. BAY OF BENGAL J. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
9. DANCE FLORES J. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
10. CASSIAN STANLEY (11) M. J. R. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
11. LADY ANSHAN (11) N. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
12. MALALA (11) W. M. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
13. MISS COTTON T. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
14. MISS JUMP (11) M. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15
15. TIRANIAN M. 8.11. J. O'Neill 15

BETTING: 9-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

2.30 HULL MITSUBISHI AMATEURS H'CAP (CLASS F) £3,500 added 1m 2f

1. 03-33 RIVERS SOURCE (12) B. H. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 03-33 STURGEON (12) K. M. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 03-33 MAZED (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 03-33 RIVER (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 03-33 MAJALIS (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 03-33 SPA (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 03-33 LEAM (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 03-33 HIGH REGARD (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 03-33 BLACKPOOL ROCK (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 03-33 FERRY FACTORS (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
11. 03-33 BIRTHDAY (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
12. 03-33 LUTHER (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
13. 03-33 REBEL TIGER (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 03-33 WHO'S NOBLE (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 03-33 BAY OF BENGAL (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 03-33 DANCE FLORES (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 03-33 CASSIAN STANLEY (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 03-33 LADY ANSHAN (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 03-33 MALALA (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 03-33 MISS COTTON (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 03-33 MISS JUMP (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
22. 03-33 TIRANIAN (12) B. P. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

3.00 MILLERS MILE HANDICAP (CLASS D) £7,000 added 3YO 1m 100yds

1. 20-01 MUSTOUE DREAM (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 20-01 CRUISE (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 20-01 RIVER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 20-01 MAJALIS (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 20-01 SPA (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 20-01 LEAM (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 20-01 HIGH REGARD (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 20-01 BLACKPOOL ROCK (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 20-01 FERRY FACTORS (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 20-01 BIRTHDAY (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
11. 20-01 LUTHER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
12. 20-01 REBEL TIGER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
13. 20-01 WHO'S NOBLE (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 20-01 BAY OF BENGAL (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 20-01 DANCE FLORES (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 20-01 CASSIAN STANLEY (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 20-01 LADY ANSHAN (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 20-01 MALALA (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 20-01 MISS COTTON (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 20-01 MISS JUMP (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 20-01 TIRANIAN (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

3.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 44-10 RIVER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 44-10 MAJALIS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 44-10 SPA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 44-10 LEAM (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 44-10 HIGH REGARD (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 44-10 BLACKPOOL ROCK (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 44-10 FERRY FACTORS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 44-10 BIRTHDAY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
11. 44-10 LUTHER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
12. 44-10 REBEL TIGER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
13. 44-10 WHO'S NOBLE (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 44-10 BAY OF BENGAL (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 44-10 DANCE FLORES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 44-10 CASSIAN STANLEY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 44-10 LADY ANSHAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 44-10 MALALA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 44-10 MISS COTTON (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 44-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 44-10 RIVER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 44-10 MAJALIS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 44-10 SPA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 44-10 LEAM (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 44-10 HIGH REGARD (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 44-10 BLACKPOOL ROCK (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 44-10 FERRY FACTORS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 44-10 BIRTHDAY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
11. 44-10 LUTHER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
12. 44-10 REBEL TIGER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
13. 44-10 WHO'S NOBLE (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 44-10 BAY OF BENGAL (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 44-10 DANCE FLORES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 44-10 CASSIAN STANLEY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 44-10 LADY ANSHAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
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20. 44-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
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21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 44-10 RIVER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 44-10 MAJALIS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 44-10 SPA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 44-10 LEAM (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 44-10 HIGH REGARD (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 44-10 BLACKPOOL ROCK (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 44-10 FERRY FACTORS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 44-10 BIRTHDAY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
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20. 44-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 44-10 RIVER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 44-10 MAJALIS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 44-10 SPA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 44-10 LEAM (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 44-10 HIGH REGARD (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 44-10 BLACKPOOL ROCK (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 44-10 FERRY FACTORS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 44-10 BIRTHDAY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
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13. 44-10 WHO'S NOBLE (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 44-10 BAY OF BENGAL (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 44-10 DANCE FLORES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 44-10 CASSIAN STANLEY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 44-10 LADY ANSHAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 44-10 MALALA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 44-10 MISS COTTON (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 44-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.30 RACING CHANNEL HANDICAP (CLASS E) £4,000 added 2m 35yds

1. 44-10 NANTON POINT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 44-10 ASTOR LINES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 44-10 RIVER (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 44-10 MAJALIS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 44-10 SPA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 44-10 LEAM (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 44-10 HIGH REGARD (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 44-10 BLACKPOOL ROCK (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 44-10 FERRY FACTORS (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
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15. 44-10 DANCE FLORES (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 44-10 CASSIAN STANLEY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 44-10 LADY ANSHAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 44-10 MALALA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 44-10 MISS COTTON (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 44-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 44-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

3.30 HYPAC HANDICAP (CLASS D) £5,000 added 5f

1. 00-00 LADY SHERRIFF (10) M. J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 00-00 NIFTY NORMAN (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 00-00 SORRETTI (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 00-00 TREASURE TOUCH (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 00-00 RIVER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 00-00 MAJALIS (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 00-00 SPA (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 00-00 LEAM (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 00-00 HIGH REGARD (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 00-00 BLACKPOOL ROCK (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
11. 00-00 FERRY FACTORS (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
12. 00-00 BIRTHDAY (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
13. 00-00 LUTHER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
14. 00-00 REBEL TIGER (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
15. 00-00 WHO'S NOBLE (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
16. 00-00 BAY OF BENGAL (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
17. 00-00 DANCE FLORES (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
18. 00-00 CASSIAN STANLEY (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
19. 00-00 LADY ANSHAN (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
20. 00-00 MALALA (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
21. 00-00 MISS COTTON (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
22. 00-00 MISS JUMP (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
23. 00-00 TIRANIAN (10) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-12 Lutea, 11-12 Mazed, 11-12 Majalis, 11-12 Blackpool Rock, 11-12 River, 11-12 Spa, 11-12 Leam, 11-12 High Regard.

4.00 BBC RADIO HUMBERSIDE MAIDEN STAKES (CLASS D) £5,000 added 5f

1. 33-10 BOLD WELCOME (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
2. 33-10 JOE ASH (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
3. 33-10 REGENT (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
4. 33-10 ANTONIA'S DOUBLE (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
5. 33-10 CASSIAN STANLEY (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
6. 33-10 LADY ANSHAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
7. 33-10 MALALA (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
8. 33-10 MISS COTTON (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
9. 33-10 MISS JUMP (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7
10. 33-10 TIRANIAN (14) J. R. 1.7. M. C. R. 11-12. B. 7

BETTING: 11-

Battle of giants ends in epic win

BY RICHARD EDMONDSON
at Wimbledon

IT WAS an epic, an odyssey, a saga, and the sets got longer as the match went on. Goran Ivanisevic attempts to make it third time lucky in tomorrow's men's singles final in the knowledge that if his encounter against Richard Krajicek had gone to a sixth set in yesterday's semi-final they would probably still be playing now.

The Croat eventually succeeded 6-3, 6-4, 5-7, 6-7, 15-13 yesterday in a match that seemed to be slipping like sand through his fingers. He squandered two match points in the fourth set and then had to wait another hour and a half for a further opportunity to kill off Krajicek. The whole business took three hours and 22 minutes.

Now comes a final and a chance to revitalise his season; a chance also to respond to those who had written him off. "This means a lot to me because a lot of people say 'he's gone, he's never going to come back,'" Ivanisevic said. "You know, I have two ears and I have to listen to this all the time."

"I knew that I had a bad six months and Wimbledon came at the right time, you know? I was practising hard for the last month, trying not to feel sorry for myself, keep working, keep trying and now it's paying off." Like Jana Novotna, Ivanisevic will attempt to erase the memory of the two finals that have gone before this weekend. It may well help if the Ambassador and the Prime Minister of Croatia return to the Royal Box they occupied yesterday as Ivanisevic is a thorough patriot. He held the flag for Croatia at the opening ceremony of the Barcelona Olympics in 1992 and metaphorically feels he is doing the same every time he steps across the tramlines.

Another inhabitant of the Royal Box yesterday will also hearten Ivanisevic. Jaroslav Drobný lost two finals before he won the title in 1954. However, the great Egyptian touch-player may not have recognised the game that was laid out before him on the

Wimbledon lawns yesterday.

The longest rally of the first semi-final lasted just seven shots and there were a total of 70 aces (42 of them by Krajicek), lending the impression that land mines were exploding around the court. A pigeon which had the misfortune to land on the grass should have been awarded the Dickin Medal for gallantry in the face of danger, such was the ferocity of the crossfire.

This alternate firing from the trenches, each man serving a magazine of bullets at the enemy, was delivered by two of the taller figures on tour. Krajicek and Ivanisevic are 6ft 5in and 6ft 4in respectively, so not a lot of cobwebs survive in their homes.

It was a bad day to be a net and it started from the first point when Ivanisevic double-faulted. He was fortunate that the amphitheatre was half-empty at this stage, while napkins were still on knees in the corporate hospitality tents.

There were 15 further double faults from Ivanisevic as he pressed for, and regularly achieved, deep second serves. Krajicek's technique was to chip at his returns, which afforded him just one outright winner in the entire match. The Croat, on the other hand, swung away violently and sent 13 return winners back past the albatross wingspan of his opponent.

And it was not all sulphur and brimstone. There were touches of the surgeon at the net from Ivanisevic (one particular drop-volley being applauded by his opponent), and several gossamer lobs from Krajicek.

At 5-4 in the fourth set the game looked up for Krajicek as Ivanisevic held two match points on serve. Indeed, he ran forward after the first with his hand proffered unaware that a service which sped past him had just clipped the top of the net. Then came a Krajicek pass and another double-fault and the game was turning.

It looked to have revolved to the Dutchman's complete satisfaction when he broke for 3-2 in the final set. It was the first time he had been ahead in the match since the first point. Ivanisevic had meanwhile



Goran Ivanisevic falls to his knees after winning his semi-final against Richard Krajicek

Robert Hallam

been talking to himself as he thundered down further aces, enquiring why he had not managed the same on his match points.

The Croat, however, was not to be humbled in front of his dignitaries and immediately broke back to love. From there the match entered a cycle of easily held service games, with Krajicek carrying

the continual stress of having to serve to keep himself in the match.

Eventually the burden broke him. At 13-14 he came up with three backhand errors and a final, tired volley into the net, the last shot of a heavy-weight encounter.

Ivanisevic, too, was shattered. "I was very tired," he said. "My ass was sore like hell."

The Croat was unusually composed through all his bad times. We could have expected him to leave a trail of mangled rackets in his furious wake. "I think if I lose my temper for just a second then I will lose that match," he said. "I was just mentally very strong. I just believed I was going to win it."

At the end of the emotional

dam burst, Ivanisevic slid to his knees and then shook his fists at the heavens. He dispensed with a need for a trip to the laundrette by throwing his towels into the crowd. He promised he would not be throwing them in again tomorrow. "I think I have a good chance," he said. "I think I can do it and I would be very disappointed if I didn't."

Last chance for popular Novotna

BY GUY HODGSON

IF THE two participants in today's women's final are under pressure today then so is the Duchess of Kent. Five years ago she consoled the sobbing Jana Novotna and told her she would win Wimbledon one day. Last year she reassured those same weepy eyes that it would be third time lucky. If the Czech does triumph against Nathalie Tauziat it will almost be by royal command.

The public's, too. Normally the British love of the underdog would put its weight on the side of Tauziat, who at 30 is in her first Grand Slam final at her 43rd attempt. But Novotna is a crushed petal who would invoke sympathy against anyone who does not have the letters GB behind her name.

That was established in 1993. Then she collapsed in a mess of emotion after surrendering her composure and the final against Steffi Graf from a seemingly impregnable position. Was she a choker? Probably. But the nation warmed to a woman so upset that she broke all protocol by pouring her heart out on royal shoulder.

Ever since she has played wrapped in an air of fragility. Novotna, the world No 3 and the owner of a game that no woman can boast is better suited to grass, ought to defeat someone who is 13 places below her in the pecking order. But even at 6-0, 5-0, 40-love today you would have doubts.

That was apparent in Novotna's semi-final against the reigning champion, Martina Hingis, on Thursday. With three match points, she threw the ball



high into the air, there was an intake of breath, a murmur, and then concerned silence. Fortunately, the second attempt at a serve crashed down with such force the return went into the net.

Now comes her third final and possibly her best chance of taking a Grand Slam title. "I think the most important thing is that I focus on myself," Novotna said, confounding those who believe the last thing the 29-year-old concoction of nerves should think about is her inner-feelings. "Don't look right or left, just over the other side of the net."

Nathalie Tauziat is playing wonderful tennis and what a great comeback she made

against Natasha Zvereva in the semi-final. She's a very dangerous opponent and, although I'm the favourite, I know it's going to be tough. Believe me it's not going to be easy."

Believe us Jana, no match involving yourself would be regarded as simple, but if anything gives encouragement to the Novotna cause it is that Tauziat is not built of Dreadnought-class steel in the mental department either. She was dreadful in the first set against Zvereva, losing it 6-1 in 21 minutes, and half forgotten in the history of the tournament was her role in 1993. Then Monica Seles' vocal accompaniment to her shots was a *cuisse célèbre* of Fleet Street which had a

wonderful time taking "grunt-ometers" on to the Centre Court. The fun was fading, however, when Tauziat gave it new impetus by complaining to the umpire during their quarter-final that the noise on the other side of the net was putting her off. Not as much as Seles, who silent and subdued, lost disappointingly to Graf in the final.

Anyone who can cry foul on foul cries will have the French, whose last women's finalist was Suzanne Lenglen 73 years ago, wondering whether she has the necessary bottle in an occasion that will be more stressful than any match she has faced before. Novotna has crumpled under the scrutiny, is Tauziat's mettle stronger?

Tauziat, who spent yesterday afternoon watching her cousin, Didier Deschamps, captain France against Italy in the World Cup, believes the difference between a disappointing record at Wimbledon of two losing quarter-finals and this year is her fitness. Normally she arrives at Wimbledon jaded, if not exhausted, but this time rain halted her run in Birmingham and she was ousted in the first round at Eastbourne.

"I needed matches but I can play pretty well on grass and I thought I'd take it positively. The match that gave me confidence was against Iva Majoli [she won 6-0, 6-1]. I have nothing to lose against Jana. For me it's a nice present to be there

on Centre Court on finals day. If I play my best tennis I think I can win."

If she does, cue an outpouring from Novotna that could surpass 1993's flood because she is only too aware that there is a mass of younger, hungrier players led by the Williams sisters and the Russian Anna Kournikova ready to supplant her at the top of the women's game.

For both finalists today the chances are this will be a last opportunity of real glory. The water-works are likely to overflow whoever loses today, which might make the profession of Tauziat's father the most appropriate detail of all. He sells bathroom fixtures.

Court circular

EDITED BY JANE MARLOW

Hingis turns into real doll

THE PUBLIC'S need for their favourite celebrities to be reproduced in doll-form has led to some frightening displays on shop floors over the years as pop stars such as the Spice Girls and Boyzone will no doubt agree.

The Sporty Spice doll had better brace herself, however, because with the imminent arrival of the Martina Hingis doll on British shores shoppers might decide the 'Can't Miss Swiss' is the one they really want. The blurb that describes the Hingis doll reads: "Martina's success is impressive, but what makes Martina special is her natural and open character and her youthful charisma. The artist, Horst Heerline has succeeded in capturing this special charisma in his work."

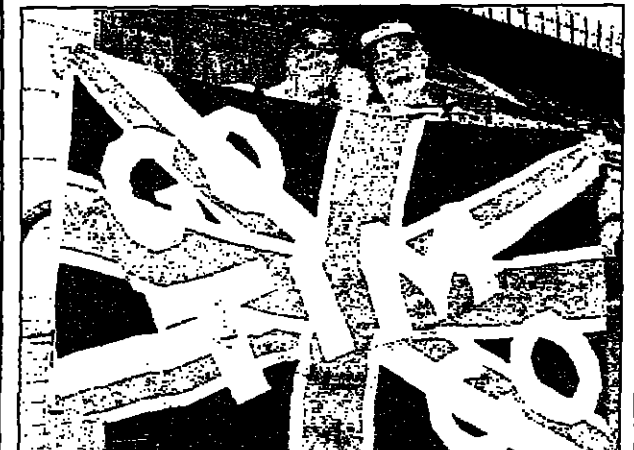
Billed as a "sort after item among fans and collectors", there are two versions priced to suit different sized pockets. At \$1500 (£925) for the porcelain doll and \$500 (£310) for the hard vinyl model, these size pockets would appear to be large and extra large. The 55cm mini-Martina is decked out in a blue polka-dot tennis kit complete with logos, racket and bag and even has a real hair wig.

Henman to reap traditional benefits

THE LAST man to win the men's singles title at Wimbledon using a Slazenger racket was John Newcombe in 1971 and it has been suggested that Tim Henman stands to earn £2m from Slazenger with whom he has a racket deal if he emulates this achievement.

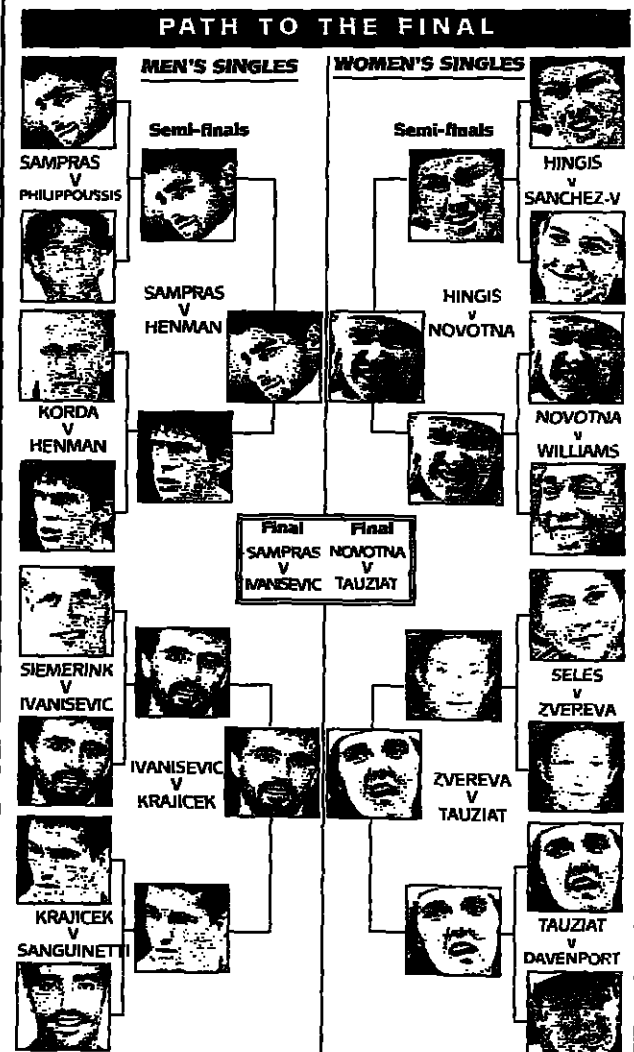
History is on Henman's side as a Slazenger racket has been used 27 times by men before him as their weapon to fight for the trophy. Their golden era was between 1890 and 1909 when Slazenger swept the board 16 times. During that period, it was W Baddeley who broke up Slazenger's run, and although he is not credited with using a certain make of racket, one might assume it wasn't something he put together in a woodwork class.

Wilson rackets have also been a popular choice with the Americans Sampras, Connors and Budge over the years but, having taken the title 21 times, even they lag behind the famous jaguar. The last entry for Tate on the winner's list was in 1889, presumably at which time he met Lyle and branched out into the sugar industry. If things go sour with Slazenger, however, maybe Tim should go for a personalised racket - Henri Cochet won the title twice using a Cochet Sport.



Despite the lack of sun at Wimbledon, support for Tim Henman was not flagging in SW19 yesterday

PA



CHAMPIONSHIP STATS	
2 The number of Wimbledon finals Goran Ivanisevic has competed in.	Wimbledon prior to yesterday's semi-final.
1,048 Number of aces Ivanisevic served in 1997.	16 Number of doubles teams in the junior competition.
3 Number of British players Sampras has beaten at ranking.	29 David Sherwood's junior ranking.
LATEST ODDS	
Ladies Singles final	William Hill: 1-6 J Novotna, 11-4 N Tauziat.
Coral: 1-3 J Novotna, 9-4 N Tauziat.	Ladbrokes: 1-4 J Novotna, 11-4 N Tauziat.
TODAY'S WEATHER	
Warmer than recent days, but still cloudy at times. Maximum temperature 25C (77F).	

IT'S ALL ABOUT BALANCE, PRECISION AND MOVEMENT.

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Brown's blitz keeps Surrey out in front

CRICKET

BY DAVID LLEWELLYN
at Swansea

Glamorgan 197 & 212
Surrey 199 & 214-4
Surrey win by six wickets

SURREY SHRUGGED off the loss of four Test players (three to England and one to injury) to inflict a crushing six-wicket defeat on reigning county champions Glamorgan and consolidate their position at the head of the current table. The high point of the day was a superb hundred from Alistair Brown, his third of the summer, which made a mockery of an inadequate target as Surrey coasted home with a day to spare.

There was little to cheer for the home fans as Brown and Ian Ward, changing their arm at times, reduced an already weakened attack to tatters. Waqar Younis is still out with an ominous elbow injury and Robert Croft is on Test duty. It exposed the inexperienced Dean Cosker to some harsh treatment.

Brown was particularly brutal on the slow left-arm and no matter from which end the 20-year-old bowled the Surrey batsmen, like some cricketing Monty, still got his man. Four of his five sizes came off Cosker, three of them out of the ground.

If Brown was at his ferocious best then Ward deserved as much credit for being so tenacious. He reached a deserved 50, his second of the match and fifth in six innings, and anchored one end superbly, especially after Glamorgan rocked the boat with three wickets. Brown and Ward's sparkling 156-run match-winning stand was broken at the death when Tony Cottee had Brown lbw, three runs short of the 211 Surrey needed. Earlier the leg-spinner Ian Salisbury mopped up what was left of a soggy Glamorgan second innings to finish with 7 for 65 - his best return for Surrey.

There was a lighter moment when the Surrey opener Jason Ratcliffe whacked a delivery from Owen Parkinson out on to the Mumbles Road where the ball was run over by a car. There was no similar replacement and the crowd watched umpire Bob White attempt to distress a new ball by rubbing dirt on it and throwing it into the footmarks at one end.

Fulton hits back to spare Kent blushes

BY JOHN COLLIS
at Maidstone

Kent v Yorkshire

WHAT A difference a day makes. On Thursday Kent, if not quite dead and buried, were certainly stretched out on a trolley in the back corridor. The sleepy pitch was not to blame for their sorry condition - they simply batted listlessly in the face of sprightly young bowling.

It took Matthew Fleming, Ben Phillips and Min Patel, late in the innings, to show that a far better response to Yorkshire's declaration total should have been possible.

After such disparity first time around the visitors still hold the upper hand, but yesterday they were never allowed to feel in control. The same seamers toiled, rather than strutted, and it was the turn of their left-arm spinner Richard Stept to bring Yorkshire back into the match.

David Byas, keeping his decision to himself until the last moment, elected to ask Kent to follow on 258 runs behind yesterday morning, and even the Kent faithful would have feared an innings defeat within three days. David Fulton begged to differ, and Trevor Ward - with just 175 runs from 13 innings - knew that first-team opportunities were running out unless he could rediscover his pugnacious touch.

Fulton has batted more consistently in a fragile order this season, and though he will never be a batsman to empty the hospitality marquees he was just the performer Kent needed yesterday to restore some dignity to their game. The lavishly talented Ed Smith is sidelined for a few weeks with a broken finger, but Fulton as well as Ward have a place to play for. He provided the anchor while Ward set sail, hitting 17 fours in a confidence-building 94.

By the time Fulton reached three figures Kent were close to asking Yorkshire to bat again, a distant prospect on Thursday evening.

For a while Carl Hooper looked in the mood to turn the game around, as if to atone for his first innings carelessness, but he was undone immediately after tea. Fulton, however, moved assuredly to a career-best score and Kent were still fighting into the evening.

Weather hampers Monty's progress

GOLF

BY ANDY FARRELL
in Newtown Mount Kennedy

NOTHING COULD have been calculated to give Colin Montgomerie more of a lift prior to his second round in the Murphy's Irish Open than the announcement of the news that the tournament the Scot has won for the last two years will be returning to Druids Glen in 1999.

With two early birdies, Montgomerie extended his lead to four strokes. While he was again making one of the hardest courses on tour look like a breeze, the wind strengthened and Montgomerie, who was hampered by a ligament strain in his right foot after tripping on Thursday, was suddenly just another struggler.

His grip slipped on his tee-shot at the 11th and the ball hit a tree merely 120 yards down the fairway. He got away with a par five, but at the 13th his approach ended on a stone bridge over the pond. He got a free drop, but did not get up and down, costing a bogey.

Worse followed at the 15th, where his second went into the water. His fourth missed the green and he then three-putted for a triple bogey. A 74 dropped Montgomerie a shot behind the joint leaders, Ireland's

John McHenry and the American rookie Craig Hainline, who both scored 68s, and Tony Johnstone, who scored a 67.

A certain grim determination has been needed, something McHenry, who has not won a penny this season, has been forced to adopt by necessity. "I am acutely aware that I need to make money rather than spend it," he said.

In an attempt to resuscitate a career interrupted by a broken bone in his left hand two years ago, the 34-year-old from Cork has been playing on the Canadian Tour but has missed the cut in each of his four events so far.

A Walker Cup team-mate of Montgomerie's in 1987, McHenry joined the tour the following year but has struggled to regain his form. Instead of rushing round desperately trying to find a place to play, McHenry spent the first four months of the year with his wife, Sylvia, who works in a finance department in Cork, and their two children.

"We sat down and had a long think about my career," he said. "I couldn't imagine doing anything that wasn't related to golf and nothing interested me so I reverted back to playing. This is a pivotal year. I haven't got a sponsor but I've got my wife's blessing to play for the entire year."



Colin Montgomerie at the fifth hole of the Murphy's Irish Open yesterday

Allsport

Six weeks ago, he chose to go to the Canadian Tour Qualifying School and finished ninth, giving him 14 weeks guaranteed action. "I needed to get away and work on my game. If it wasn't for the Irish Open I might have lost my focus."

At Druids Glen, McHenry is suddenly the leading Irish challenger for a title that a home player has not won for 16 years - more famous names such as Darren Clarke,

Pdraig Harrington and Paul McGinley missed the cut.

"I always get myself psyched up for the Irish Open," McHenry said. "Every time you perform in front of your home crowd you make an extra effort. But I'd be the first to say that this is a very tough course. It crushed me last year so I'm taking it a hole at a time."

With the set-up having much in common with the US Open, Hainline

must be feeling at home while Ernie Els, a two-time winner of that championship, added his second successive level par 71. This was despite two double bogeys, including one at the 10th which saw his caddy, Ricky Roberts, diving for cover.

"I'll have to apologise to him," said the normally placid South African. "I seem to be getting a bit irritated the last couple of weeks worrying about my back injury."

Davies ends dismal run for share of the lead

BRITAIN'S LAURA DAVIES bounced back to form with a superb three-under par 68 to share the lead after the first round of the US Women's Open at Blackwolf Run in Wisconsin.

A round of four birdies - including one at the 421 yards last where she almost holed out with a six-iron second shot - saw her finish alongside the American Kim Williams. They led by a shot from two other Americans, Leslie Spaulding and Pat Hurst, and the South Korean Pak Se-ri.

By her standards, Davies has had a miserable year. She has missed five cuts from 14 starts, and admitted: "It's been a real struggle and my confidence is at an all-time low."

The score helped lift her spirits, although Davies, the 1987 champion, insisted: "It's only one round and I'm not getting carried away. I've blown so many rounds this year and I was really panicking near the end."

"The trouble is that I'm not here to make up the numbers. I'm only interested in winning and even if I finish in the top 10 I won't be happy."

It was a disappointing first round for the defending champion Alison Nicholas. Still recovering from viral pneumonia, she struggled to a 78 that included a back nine of 42. But she remained philosophical, saying: "I wasn't playing well before I came here and so I shouldn't have expected too much. But it was disappointing and I could feel myself getting tight as the round progressed."

Davies charged into the lead with birdies at the fifth and sixth and she holed her longest putt of the day, from 20 feet, at the 10th. Her only mistake came at the 14th, where she misjudged her second shot and failed to get up and down from through the green, but the spectacular three at the 18th repaired the damage.

Helen Dohson, from Skegness, had a par 71, while the Scottish rookie, Mhairi McKay, had an impressive debut shooting a one-over par 72.

Golding takes tougher option

SAILING

BY STUART ALEXANDER

IN A TEST of nerve versus performance, Britain's Mike Golding tomorrow starts a 3,500-mile, one-on-one battle with the Italian Giovanni Soldini, single-handed from Falmouth to Charleston, North Carolina.

The nerve is Soldini's as he takes his Open 60, Fila, back to sea again only a few miles away from the spot, 400 miles from the western approaches, where the same yacht pitch-poled, a record time in sight, at the beginning of April in 80-knot

winds. In the capsized, after being hit by a huge wave, his great friend and one of the design team, Andrea Romanelli, was drowned. The yacht struggled on to Lorient and then was repaired in La Rochelle, the lost mast replaced, the hull and rudder damage made good.

The performance test is for Golding, not just in taking on such an experienced competitor, but in the first run in anger for his new Open 60, Group 4, built by the same French company in Cherbourg and sporting the same rotating wing mast, boom-stayed rigging and swinging keel.

The 32-year-old Soldini is no

stranger to calamity. He hit a submerged iceberg in 1992 when racing in the Plymouth to Newport Europe One Star broke a rudder, and still finished second in the 50-foot class. On the way back, in the Quebec to St Malo race, the keel came off, the boat capsized and the crew had to be rescued 800 miles off the coast of Ireland.

He admits that tomorrow's race is important because it is the first time he has really gone to sea since the nightmare. But he says there is no fear, not even worry. "It's not new, the first time I have crossed the ocean alone," he said. "We had a bad accident, but that's life. You can have

an accident every day, everywhere, doing anything."

Such things do not weigh on Golding's mind, who admits that after a frantic year, he is still learning how to sail his two-months-old, £1m grand prix beast. "We had to be on the money as far as pace was concerned, right up there with the fastest 60s. I know the mast and rig look terrifying, but when you sail on the boat you just forget about it, it seems right," he said.

He admits that the builders told him that, although the boat is capable of speeds up to 35 knots, he is not yet up to driving it at that speed. But Golding has a longer-term ob-

jective and the hop across the Atlantic puts him on the start line in September of the Around Alone race, single-handed to Cape Town, Auckland, Punta del Este (Uruguay), and back in Charleston.

He has done it before, with an amateur crew in two Global Challenge events and non-stop alone going the same "wrong" way round in the same 67-foot boat. Now he is heading for a tougher league, as are Mike Garside and Jean-Pierre Moulligne, contesting the Open 50 class. Japan's first solo transatlantic sailor, the 64-year-old Minoru Saito, says he will be "just warming up" in his 50-foot Shuten-dohji II.

Douglas' quick start batters down hatches

ROWING

BY HUGH MATHESON
at Henley

HENLEY YESTERDAY once again proved its ability to trip up even the best with the defeat of the British No 1 Guin Batten, the selected sculler, in the women's event, the Princess Royal Cup.

Batten was facing the emerging Australian, Gina Douglas, 25, who has converted this year as a single sculler after two years in her national eight and one season in the double scull. The two raced in Belgium 10 days ago when the Briton finished seventh with Douglas one place behind.

The graduate of the Australian Institute of Sport got the faster start in spite of Batten cramming 42 strokes into the first minute and by the mile had opened up a half-length lead. Both then settled into a mid-race pace of 33 strokes to the minute and Batten, who finished fifth in the 1996 Olympic final, allowed her opponent to open up a two-lengths lead to Fawley, before beginning to strike back.

When the second effort came after the mile the push to get in front worked well as the gap was reduced all the way to the line, but it was too little too late.

Today's semi-finals in the Princess Royal look a mite mismatched as the weight of money in both races should follow the scales with the Swedish former World Champion Maria Brandin, at 13st 10lb, set to squash the Argentine Maria Garisoain, at 9st 4lb, and Douglas putting her 12st 13lb against Sarah Watts - the last Briton in the event - at 9st 3lb.

In the Diamond sculls the Irish National champion Albert Maher got the better of his lightweight compatriot Gearoid Towey in a fierce tussle, with both scullers being warned for taking too much of the middle stream. In the end it was Maher who held the best water in the final sprint and who got home by a length. Today he meets the World Champion Jamie Koven in what he describes as "the best chance of my life".

Today's biggest clash comes in the Steward's Cup for coxless fours where the 1992 and 1996 Olympic champions the "awesome foursome" from Australia will relish a chance to snatch a crown from the British 1997 World Champions, rowing as Leander Club.

The Leander crew has suffered from an injury to Tim Foster which forced Matthew Pinent, Steve Redgrave and James Cracknell to race with a substitute in the World Cup first round in Munich in May. They finished fourth but made it clear that in their view the event had moved on since 1997 and the substitution was not solely to blame. The Australians will be an excellent measure as they rank only second in their own country to a four which won the next round of the FISA Cup. This is a race the British must win to provide a platform for Lucerne next weekend and the World Championships in September.

The other half of the Steward's Cup has the two fastest lightweight fours of 1997, with France challenging the world champions Denmark. In spite of giving away around 3st per man, either crew could make the final a giant-killing ground.

Final chance for Broncos

RUGBY LEAGUE

BY DAVE HADFIELD

SEVERAL LONDON Broncos players face Hull tomorrow with a warning hanging over them. It reads: "Shape up or ship out".

Their miserable form sees them one off the bottom of Super League going into this weekend's matches and the club has been trying to analyse what has gone wrong.

"We've been talking to them individually and trying to get inside their heads," said the London chief executive, Tony Rea.

Although the Broncos played with what their coach, Tony Currie, called "a gun at their heads" at Halifax last week, it did not help their performance. The message has been reinforced this week, with some players being told that this is their last chance.

Rea has been scouting for possible

replacements and has identified two outside backs and two young front-rowers in the First Division for whom he may make a move.

The Broncos have the boost tomorrow of re-uniting last season's successful half-backs for the first time. Shaun Edwards returning from Bradford to partner Tuisen Toleit.

Grant Young is out with a hand injury, but Hull have had the longer injury list with 14 players under treatment. They have agreed with Wigan to keep Craig Murdoch until the end of the season, after which they hope to make the move permanent.

Eric Hughes, St Helens' new football operations manager, will witness the battle tomorrow between the two clubs which sacked him.

Hughes was removed from the coaching job at Saints to make way from Shaun McRae and later had a season in charge at Wigan. His return to St Helens to work alongside

McRae creates an interesting situation, although Hughes has pledged not to interfere in coaching matters.

Saints' immediate problem is a calf injury to Robbie Goulding, which breaks up a midfield that looked effective against Salford last week. Sean Long will move to scrum-half and Tommy Martyn to stand-off.

Karl Hammond returning to the starting line-up at loose forward and Julian O'Neill and Paul Newlove returning. Wigan are unchanged.

All clubs will be keen to go into the mid-season interlude on a high note, not least Salford, who meet Leeds at Gateshead in the first of Super League's missionary matches next Friday.

Tomorrow, they have David Bradbury back but David Hulme and Josh White added to their casualty list against an unchanged Warrington. The Rugby League is setting up a panel to meet monthly and review refereeing standards.

Doohan takes a grip over rivals

MOTORCYCLING

BY DAVID FERN
at Donington

MICHAEL DOOHAN indicated to his rivals once again that his is the bike to beat, as he took charge of the opening qualifying session for tomorrow's British 500cc Grand Prix at Donington Park.

The four-times world champion rates the Leicestershire circuit as one of his least favourite, complaining of a lack of grip, but that has not stopped the 33-year-old Australian winning here for the past three years, and he once again claimed provisional pole start.

The Repsol Honda rider qualified in typically smooth and assured fashion, recording a best time of 1min 32.871sec as he lapped the 2.5 undulating, twisting miles at an average speed of 96.91mph. But his title rivals found the going tougher. The Italian Max Biaggi, the current championship leader, leading Doohan by three points, could only manage sixth best time on his Kanemoto Honda, while the two Spaniards Alex Criville and Carlos Checa both crashed.

Criville, fifth fastest, slid off at McLeans, but is fit to continue, while Checa, who crashed spectacularly out of the morning free practice session, underwent surgery at the Queens Medical Centre, Nottingham, yesterday afternoon after sustaining internal injuries.

British hopes in the 30-lap race centre on Scott Smart, the nephew of former world champion Barry Sheene, and John McGuinness, who qualified their Hondas 15th and 18th respectively.

Leon Haslam, the 15-year-old son of former Grand Prix rider Ron, had an 125cc qualifying session to forget. He managed only one lap before the engine of his Honda seized, then crashed out on his spare machine.

Bugner's world title bid

BOXING

JOE BUGNER, once the great white hope of British boxing, is aiming to beat up a preacher to win a world title - 23 years after his last attempt was foiled by Muhammad Ali. If he succeeds, the 48-year-old grandfather will become the oldest heavyweight champion in boxing history.

But, if Bugner loses, James "Bonecrusher" Smith will become, at the grand old age of 45, the second punching preacher after George Foreman to win back a world title. Bugner and Smith will square off today in Gold Coast, Australia, for the vacant and little-known World Boxing Federation heavyweight title.

For the Hungarian-born Bugner, who emigrated to Australia from England in 1968, the fight gives him the chance to finally win a world title

after he failed at his previous attempt. On that occasion, in Kuala Lumpur in 1975, he was beaten on points by the great Ali. Almost a quarter of a century later, Bugner says nothing will stop him from fulfilling his dream.

"It's a very serious business and after all the years that we have been in this business, trust me, I'm not going in there to play tiddlywinks with him - I'm going to try to brain him," Bugner said.

Smith, the former World Boxing Association champion who lost his crown to Mike Tyson in 1987, will be determined to stop him.

Yesterday both men said that despite their age they were in good condition and would be able to last the scheduled 12 rounds.

There was no edge to the pre-match banter with Bugner often acting as the straight man to Smith's

fast-talking trainer Eddie Mustafa Muhammad.

"We did not come all the way over here to box," Muhammad said. "We came for one thing. To lay this man in a prone position and have the referee count 10 and out."

At yesterday's weigh-in, held in a bar in the centre of Australia's Gold Coast tourist strip, Bugner found himself in an unusual position - at 118.45 kilograms he was the lighter of the two boxers. Smith weighed in at 127.85kg.

"It's the first time in a very, very long time, so it will be nice to thump somebody who's much bigger than me," Bugner said.

Smith, a preacher from North Carolina, said he would rely on divine intervention.

"I'm a representative of God and we're going to see the spirit and power," Smith said.

Croats flying with the jet-set

Croatia's footballers have a point to prove when they play Germany today, but revenge is not on the agenda. By Adam Szreter

MIROSLAV BLAZEVIC, Croatia's Bosnian-born coach, is never afraid to speak his mind. Before the tournament began, he said: "We have the best players in the world and we will play France in the final." His prediction cannot now come true, but as long as Croatia are in the World Cup his boast remains open to debate - although even within the ranks of his own team it is hard to find anyone who agrees with him.

"We share his confidence but we never thought - and I still don't think - we can get to the final," said Slaven Bilic, the Everton defender upon whom Croatia will be depending to deal with the aerial threat posed by Germany's Oliver Bierhoff in tonight's fourth quarter-final in Lyon. It is a repeat of the Euro 96 quarter-final at Old Trafford which Germany won 2-1, a bruising, poorly refereed encounter which left both teams feeling aggrieved.

Igor Stimac, the Derby County captain who was dismissed for two bookable offences, is one of eight players used by Croatia that day who are in the squad in France and that experience, plus the knowledge that only a terrible decision denied them a potentially decisive penalty in the second half, has all contributed towards a feeling of genuine belief that Germany are beatable.

"They are Germany, but so far they've done everything but impress," Bilic said. "They have their strengths but they have their weaknesses as well. We definitely wanted to play Germany because we want to prove to them that we can beat them, and although they are the favourites it's going to be very hard for them. The most important thing we learnt from Manchester is that we can beat them."

So far Croatia have enjoyed a low profile during the competition. They have been welcomed with open arms by the citizens of Vittel, the peaceful spa town in the World Cup-starved North-east of France, but as soon as they had beaten Romania in the second round everyone started paying attention and the quarter-final propaganda campaign kicked off the very next day.

Berti Vogts, the German coach, was quoted as saying Croatia would be easy opponents, something which clearly riled Blazevic if not Bilic. "We have been irritated by certain things we've heard from the Germans, but that should not affect the way we prepare for the match," the coach said. "It hasn't come from the German team but from the German media and I am having problems calming every-

one down. It is a big enough game not to have to motivate my players or psyche them up, but the German media have wound us up and I don't want these things to influence my team. It's a World Cup quarter-final and I hope it's a match of fair play."

Bilic, a former captain of Karlsruhe in the German Bundesliga, prefers to take a more pragmatic view of proceedings. "We heard last night that their manager was saying we are not that good, we are easy opponents - brilliant! That's the best way to motivate us. If Berti Vogts is trying to kill our confidence by saying that then it's completely bollocks. He can only motivate us more. But he can't make us nervous. Most of us have been in football for years."

"I must add that I was a little disappointed when, straight after the second-round game against Romania, a few German journalists came straight to me and the first question was, 'Are you ready for revenge?' I mean, what's revenge? There's no revenge. They didn't steal from us or kill someone. Football is only a sport, it's not like war. Especially, we don't want any problems with Germany because Germany was the country that helped Croatia most in building up, politically and economically."

Even when talking about football, it is hard to steer any conversation involving Croatia away from politics. It is still only eight years since they were reborn as a nation, and football played its part in that. When Zvonimir Boban, now Croatia's captain, manhandled a Serbian policeman during a riot at a match between Dynamo Zagreb (now Croatia Zagreb) and Red Star Belgrade, it was widely perceived as the first blow struck for independence from the Yugoslav authorities.

Football remains desperately important to the people of Croatia, and Bilic believes the team has already done the country proud in France.

"We are happy with what we have achieved so far but we know this is a big, big chance for us," he said. "Now is the worst time to lose a game because you're only one match away from winning a medal, but this is already an enormous success for such a small country, no matter how good our team is."

"This is the first time Croatia is involved in such a big tournament as the World Cup, and if you look at the teams in the quarter-finals all the other seven have already been either European or World champions. So we are privileged to be in the jet-set society of football and we are very happy about it."



Miroslav Blazevic, confident of Croatian success today, keeps the memory of Benny Hill alive

Michel Spingler/AP

Vogts keeps to tradition

BERTI VOGTS, Germany's coach, has appealed for the referee in today's quarter-final against Croatia to prevent a repeat of the bruising European Championship meeting between the two sides.

The 51-year-old, set to take charge of his 100th match as coach of the European champions, also warned his players, several of whom played in the 2-1 win in the Euro 96 quarter-final, not to react to the Croats' aggressive style in Lyons.

The Germans won that ill-tempered clash, but not before Derby's Croatian defender, Igor Stimac, was sent off. Directing his message to the Norwegian referee Rune Pedersen, Vogts said: "I hope he is going to get involved immediately because I want my players to be protected."

The former international defender added: "I have told the players not to lose their cool in face of what I expect to be a very very aggressive Croat side."

Vogts, who was assistant to Franz Beckenbauer when West Germany won the 1990 title, said he was satisfied with the preparations for the match. "The mentality of the team is totally different compared to 1994, when the players were only thinking of playing Italy in the semi-finals and felt the Bulgarians [who won 2-1] would be a pushover," he said.

Vogts, who praised the Croats, saying they were "first class" and "technically very gifted", said he was leaning towards starting with the team that finished the match against Mexico, where the three-times world champions came from behind to win 2-1. But he appears to be undecided over who to play in the wing-back positions and will take two from the quartet of Milan's Christian Ziege, Jörg Heinrich, who won the 1997 European Cup with Borussia Dortmund, Bayern Munich's Michael Tarnat and Stefan Reuter, who was a member of the 1990 squad.

After the Mexico game, Vogts said improvements were clearly

needed if Germany were to reach their seventh final. "I'm pretty happy with the way things are going, but I certainly wouldn't be if we took it so close to the wire again," he said. "We don't want to go home early. We really fought tooth and nail and hung on German-style to beat Mexico."

Vogts now has his eyes on the ultimate prize as his side prepare to meet Croatia - and his strategy is to bring the full armoury of German virtues to bear.

"That is how we will win. We are never going to play like Brazilians, there is no point in trying to. We must put faith in our traditional values and then we can beat anyone."



DIARY

In all the anguished raking over this week of all those heart-breaking penalty shoot-outs it has been forgotten that in 1994 the England team was only denied a victorious homecoming from the Gay World Cup in New York because of another damned penalty shoot-out defeat at the hands of Germany. Four years on and England's premier gay side, Stonewall FC (known as The Lions and glorying under the slogan of "Til, tough and proud and England's only World Cup winners since 1966") have the chance of revenge in the World Cup competition to be held as part of the Gay Games being staged in Amsterdam next month. As European Gay champions, England are one of the tournament favourites.

At a Liverpool game last season, attended by Glenn Hoddle and Bobby Gould, the Wales manager tried to claim Michael Owen, on the basis that the Chester hospital where the youngster was born, stands half in Wales, half in England. "Can we do a swap?" said Gould. "What Owen and Ryan Giggs?" replied Hoddle, puzzled that his Welsh counterpart was prepared to sacrifice his best player. "Exactly" replied Gould before explaining himself in a pointed reference to the Manchester United star's frustrating propensity for picking up mysterious injuries just before friendly internationals. "That way I get to use Owen in friendlies and you won't be able to use Giggs."

Diego Maradona stunned the supporters who queued up to watch him train by his amazing tricks with a ball and now Ronaldo has shown that he has as many party pieces up his sleeve. There was a spontaneous outburst of applause from onlookers during a Brazil training session when the star striker juggled the ball on his thigh, caught it behind his neck, and - with the ball still in position on his shoulders - lowered himself to the ground to do half a dozen push-ups.

Compiled by Trevor Haylett

Basler the next target for Dalglish

By Alan Nixon

KENNY DALGLISH is making a £1m move to bring the German international midfielder Mario Basler to Newcastle United from Bayern Munich.

Basler is interested in moving to England, although he has had offers from Italy, and he is the type of player who could excite the Newcastle fans. The fee will have to be reasonable for Newcastle's board to accept the package, as Basler is unlikely to have a sell-on value.

Liverpool have called off the proposed transfer of the French full-back Eric Sikora from Lens. The 30-year-old had been involved in discussions with the Anfield club all week after completing a medical, but it is believed there were complications over his contract which put a halt to the deal.

Dion Dublin has agreed terms to remain at Coventry City for another five years. The England international was the joint leading scorer in the Premiership last season.

Wigan Athletic are to advertise for a new manager next week following yesterday's departure of John Deehan to Sheffield United as chief coach under Steve Bruce. Deehan's No 2, the former Manchester City manager John Benson, takes temporary charge at Springfield Park.

Rangers are poised to bring the Argentine-born forward Gabriel Omar Amato to Scotland after finalising personal terms with the player. The 27-year-old is expected to arrive in Glasgow once a fee, believed to be in the region of £4.2m, has been agreed with his Spanish club Real Mallorca. The Dutch international, Giovanni van Bronckhorst, is also close to sealing a £5m move from Feyenoord to Rangers.

So what do you think of it so far?

Trevor Haylett asked six personalities how they are enjoying France 98

The country you have enjoyed watching the most (apart from your own)

Most impressive player

Overall verdict on the tournament

Overall verdict on England's performance

Most impressive England player

Verdict on refereeing standards

What is the alternative to penalty shoot-outs?

What was your immediate reaction on seeing David Batty's penalty miss?

Which television pundit talks most sense?



Frankie Dettori
Champion jockey and Arsenal fan

England for their fighting spirit. Dismissed before the start, they took one of the favourites to the very last kick.

Michael Owen for the vitality and excitement he brought to the tournament.

It's been great and I just wish I could have got over to France to see some of the games.

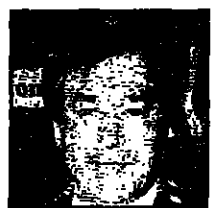
I thought they did extremely well and the country could be proud of their team.

I wouldn't like to single anybody out - they all did fantastically well.

No comment

I don't think there is one. I just had a feeling that it was inevitable. I was hoping that David Seaman would be able to save all the Argentina penalties but it wasn't to be.

Des Lynam.



Tony Banks
Sports minister and Chelsea fan

France - because they have a couple of Chelsea players in the squad.

Ronaldo and Henry of France but most of all Cesar Sampaio, a defender who scored impressively against Chile and Scotland.

Fantastic football - shame about the ticketing arrangements and the behaviour of England fans in Marseilles.

Nothing to be ashamed of but like the rest of the country I felt that Owen and Beckham should have been in from the start.

Michael Owen - he is our Ronaldo and shows a maturity beyond his years.

It started off quite well but since then has deteriorated.

I would like to see a supremacy index made up from a calculation of possession and shots on target.

I wasn't really surprised, I had a terrible feeling of fatalism about the outcome.

I've been very impressed with Ruud Gullit but then as a Chelsea fan I would be wouldn't I? I also like Andy Gray.



Delia Smith
Celebrity cook and Norwich City shareholder

Brazil are so graceful - they don't appear to be running - and I really warmed to Paraguay against France.

Michael Owen - his goal against Argentina was easily the best of the tournament so far.

I think it's been wonderful and I was bereft on the two days this week when there were no matches.

We were extremely good against Colombia and magnificent against Argentina but the lesson of this World Cup, with Gazza and David Beckham in mind, is the importance of discipline.

Apart from Owen, Tony Adams and Sol Campbell have impressed me.

It's like refereeing always is - sometimes good, sometimes bad. Why can't we make use of all the technological aids now available?

I don't think there is but I do think our teams should practise a bit more!

I just couldn't believe that we went out that way having played so well with 10 men.

Ruud Gullit is very convincing. I also like Bobby Robson.



Philip Don
Former referee

Brazil - with their flair and their level of fitness they can beat everyone hands down.

Ronaldo because of his pace and Dunga for his organisational qualities.

It's been very successful but reveals that there's still a gulf between the developing nations and the established countries.

Apart from the disappointment against Romania I think they did well overall.

Michael Owen - for his pace and his willingness to take defenders on.

Very inconsistent. I've also been disappointed with the fitness and the positioning of the referees and also with the performance of the assistant referees.

I don't think there is an alternative in a competition like a World Cup when you are working to fixed dates.

I just felt very very disappointed because they had done so well to hold on for 75 minutes with 10 men.

Is there one? I am disappointed because they are all critical of officials and guilty of remarks contradicting the laws of the game.



Richard Scudamore
Football League chief executive

Nigeria - once they sort out their defensive naivety they'll be a match for anyone.

Ariel Ortega - always threatening to make something happen.

Great football - as always the game has risen above the organisational difficulties.

We did not achieve what was expected or required - probably got what we deserved against Argentina.

Sol Campbell.

Better than expected given the hype. Fifa should take the best referees even if that means more than one per country.

Playing to a Golden Goal to the finish would force teams to be more positive in extra-time.

Why do I always convince myself it will be a happier ending than this?

Alan Hansen and Martin O'Neill.



Bobby Gould
Wales manager

The Argentines, particularly Juan Veron, and Morocco for the movement, pace and understanding of their front players.

Adrian Ilie for Romania, the Paraguayan goalkeeper Jose Luis Chilavert and obviously Michael Owen.

Too many teams were nervous in the group stages and that doesn't make for good games. The format must also be looked at because it is a long time for players to be away.

They came together as a team against Argentina, might have scored more goals against Tunisia while Romania produced a very good display against them.

Michael Owen. I told Glenn Hoddle last season that I should have him because he was born in a hospital half in Wales, half in England.

They looked petrified at the start, then there was the blitz, now things have settled down.

Reduce the teams at different stages following extra-time. There'd be so much space goals would come.

I switched off the television.

It's gone way over the top and I prefer not to listen to them. I like to make up my own mind.

Simeone a disciple of team discipline

Memories of the 1978 final, and why English parents are unlikely to name their sons Diego. By John Nisbet

DIEGO SIMEONE ensured on Tuesday that England would forever be wary of Argentinian players with the first name Diego.

His theatrical fall following David Beckham's kick led to a red card for the Englishman and more World Cup woe at the hands of the South Americans.

The 28-year-old Argentina captain, who will lead the two-time world champions out against the Netherlands in today's quarter-final in Marseille, showed that England were not on the same park as his team in respect of the art of gamesmanship. His namesake, Diego Maradona, scored a goal with his "Hand of God" 12 years earlier in the quarter-finals. Diego Jr won a dubious penalty decision and delivered his coup de grace when, like the good South American professional he is, he collapsed when Beckham kicked him.

Simeone knew what the consequences for Beckham would be as he had noticed that the Danish referee, Kim Nielsen, was looking straight at them.

Even Simeone's fellow Internazionale club-mates, with whom he had won last season's Uefa Cup, joined in the criticism of his behaviour. "I know Simeone well, and he was play acting," said Italy's goalkeeper, Gianluca Pagliuca.

However, Simeone, who has made a stunning comeback to Italian football after taking a seven-year break in Spain following a torrid time at Pisa, is determined nothing will stand in his way.

Four years ago in the United States Maradona's drugs test ruined team morale. "I really felt that we had the team that could win the Cup and then, as always with an Argentine team, outside forces and a

human failing destroyed our dream," he said.

Simeone, keen to improve his scoring rate, which currently stands at three in 75 appearances, is a keen adherent to the discipline that the coach Daniel Passarella has introduced since he took over in 1994. "To win something you have to compromise - I'd rather win through a solid performance than go down in style," he said.

Simeone, whose will to win was hardened further by the 1996 Olympic final defeat to Nigeria, realises that the Dutch, on a man-to-man basis, will be a much tougher team than England. "However, we have great team spirit and the Dutch must be rocking after the punch that Van der Sar threw at Bogarde after their last match, that destroyed the image of unity they had been putting on for the press and don't worry, we'll take full advantage of that," he warned.

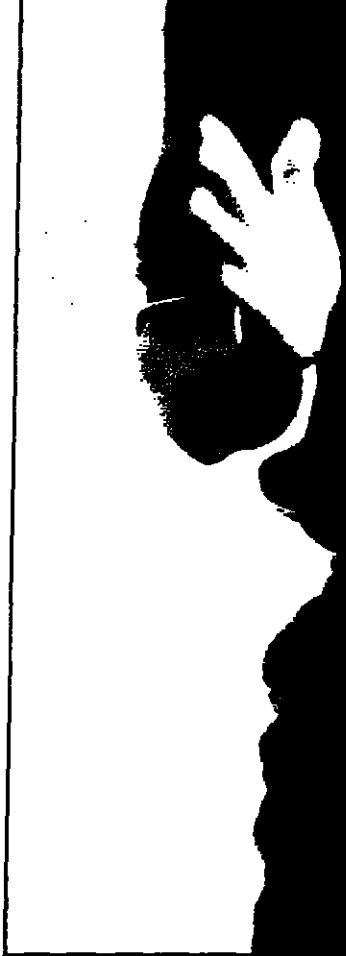
Memories of the 1978 World Cup final will come flooding back for many Argentinians today.

Argentina's captain Passarella, who lifted the trophy after a 3-1 extra-time win over the Netherlands in front of a jubilant home crowd, is now the coach.

On the Dutch bench will be Johan Neeskens, his team's midfield motor in the 1978 final, as he was in the 1974 final which was lost to West Germany, and now the assistant trainer to Guus Hiddink.

Their memories will doubtless be mixed, one shrouded in Argentine ticker-tape and the euphoria of victory that spilled into the streets of Buenos Aires, the other tinged with Dutch disappointment.

Alongside Passarella on the bench for the quarter-final will be his assistant Americo Gallego, the mid-



Edgar Davids leads his Dutch team-mates, Wim Jonk and Pierre van Hooijdonk, as they go through their paces at the Stade Velodrome yesterday Reuters

field ball-winner for Cesar Luis Menotti's 1978 world champions.

Argentina's physical fitness trainer Ricardo Pizzarotti, who did the same job 20 years ago for Menotti's side, will also be there.

Passarella said: "It's a wonderful memory of a squad of players who sacrificed themselves, who worked hard to reach an objective [Argentina had] never achieved. "The memory brings great hap-

piness but, to recall the times we were living in, not so much," he added.

Argentina and the Netherlands met again a year later in FIFA's 75th anniversary match in Bern but the Dutch failed to exact revenge in

a 0-0 draw and Argentina won the trophy in a penalty shoot-out.

In 1974, the Dutch had beaten Argentina twice in a month, winning a World Cup warm-up in Amsterdam 4-1, then crushing the Argentines

again 4-0 in the tournament's second round.

So the Dutch have only lost out-right one of their four meetings with the Argentines - the one that mattered most.



Henry Kissinger (left), the American statesman, and Gianni Agnelli, the head of Fiat, watch France take on Italy in the quarter-finals in the Stade de France yesterday Reuters

Beckham dismissal 'diabolical'

THE FORMER World Cup referee Clive Thomas has severely censured the Danish match official Kim Nielsen for sending off David Beckham in England's World Cup clash with Argentina.

Nielsen dismissed Beckham two minutes into the second half - a decision which almost certainly cost England their place in the World Cup. "It was a diabolical decision," Thomas said. "I would have dealt with it with a yellow card."

"I couldn't understand how the referee could give a red card for violent conduct. How on earth could it be violent conduct when the player is lying face down on the ground and kicks his foot up. The referee made a very bad decision there. Not one English referee would have sent Beckham off for that offence. Not one."

Nielsen is not the only match official to feel Thomas's wrath during the tournament. The Welshman, no stranger to controversy during his own career, believes this year's World Cup has been ruined by a "lack of judgement" by many of the

men in black. "The refereeing in this tournament has been a disgrace," he said. "They lack judgement on major decisions."

"We have got the best teams in the world playing so there should be the best teams of referees in the world. I gave the ref six out of 10 but that was probably one more than he and a lot of referees in the competition deserved."

"But, in that particular game, major decisions were questionable. You can make minor decisions in the middle of the field but, when you give major ones like the penalties, you must be right."

The penalty against David Seaman was really 50-50. He had to be quick and that was his prerogative. But there was certainly no penalty for Michael Owen at the other end. England should not have had a penalty for that. Having said that, there was a handball by Jose Chamot when he went up for a challenge with Alan Shearer in extra-time. The major decisions he made cost England the game and their place in the World Cup."

Owen is one of four England players facing possible selection to a World Cup all-star team. Fifa has named a 62-strong star-studded line-up from the which the top 11 will be announced on 10 July, two days before the World Cup final.

Owen is joined up front by Alan Shearer, while Paul Ince is included in the midfield choices and Tony Adams at the back.

Owen and Shearer, who both scored two goals at France 98, are in a group which includes the likes of Ronaldo, Gabriel Batistuta, Oliver Bierhoff and Christian Vieri.

Owen must be a strong contender to be in the starting XI after electrifying the World Cup stage with his fearlessness, pace and ability, which all combined to help him score the goal of the tournament to date. His 50-yard run against Argentina, beating two defenders before a raking 14-yard shot into the top corner was not enough to help his side into the quarter-finals, but certainly announced his arrival on the world stage.

The performances of Shearer,

Ince and Adams throughout France 98, meanwhile, only served to cement their reputations in the game.

The Football Association wants Hoddle to lead England into the next World Cup in 2002, despite the team's second round exit from this year's competition.

Hoddle signed a four-year deal when he took over from Terry Venables in June 1996, but he may be offered a new agreement which could substantially increase his £250,000-a-year salary. He might even stay in the post until the 2006 World Cup which England are hoping to stage.

The FA chairman Keith Wiseman said: "There is no doubt in my mind that England will win the World Cup under Glenn Hoddle. We have complete confidence in him. Glenn is only halfway through his current agreement and when he wants a new one, we will talk."

Wiseman said the reaction of the crowd on the England team's return home showed how highly the fans thought of them. "It reflected our mood and how we think of Glenn," he added.

Football has taken control of my brain

SO WHAT do you do with two whole days without a World Cup game on television? Stay in mourning for England? Reintroduce yourself to the family, assuming they haven't left home yet? Try to work out what would have happened if the England-Argentina penalty shoot-out had reached 10-10 - would they have been allowed an extra penalty because Beckham had been sent off? Or, decide whether to send a fax to Motty in France about this?

If you cannot make up your mind don't be afraid. It's not your fault because it doesn't belong to you any more. It is all part of the greatest attempt at mass hypnotism in the history of humanity. Fifty-six football matches in just 21 days probably qualifies those of us who have been watching for a rescue by the Animal Liberation Front. We are all part of a vast socio-media experiment in

STAN HEY
VIEW FROM
THE
ARMCHAIR



which, like the World Cup itself, there can only be one winner - and that is the huge capitalist cartel made up of broadcasters, sponsors and advertisers. The footballers think that it's all about them but they are poor deluded fools! We viewers believe ourselves to be kings, but we are merely blips on an electronic abacus.

We are told more than 26 million people watched the England game last Tuesday night on ITV. So even now there are shadowy networks of

focus-group personnel scouring the land to locate the 25 million who didn't tune in, so that they can be re-programmed. There is no escape.

Even when you experience what passes for sleep the voices can still be heard. David Pleat telling you that you are "lying too deep to be affected"; John Motson giving you the background history of each and every spring in your mattress; Kevin Keegan bleating like one of the sheep you've been counting in order to get to sleep in the first place. They will still haunt you.

So the effect of the two days break is not to refresh your brain nor to persuade you to seek alternative sources of entertainment, but to want more football. You crave for it. You want it so much you'll sell vital organs on the black market. You cannot understand why it's not on the tv anymore, or why they aren't previewing Euro

2000 already. Crazy, you scan the outer limits of the European satellite broadcast system to see if any channel is showing a re-run of Paraguay against Bulgaria.

Denied this, you will even accept, as a methadone-style substitute, a combination of all the national anthem sequences shown so far, with the French television cameras tracking along a line of faces who are all out to establish a simple human truth - that footballers can't sing. You can hear all your own favourites again - Ivan Zamorano belting out the Chilean song as though he was making his debut in the latest Andrew Lloyd-Webber musical. And what about that cheery little wave from David Batty as the camera passed him each time, what was he trying to convey - that he would rather take a penalty than sing "God Save The Queen"?

But the lowest possible degradation is when you find yourself wanting to see all over again those celebrity cut-aways which the Hello!-minded French director so kindly provided to keep us addicted to the broadcast. I want to play "Spot Rod Stewart in the Scottish Crowd" all over again. I want to guess who's girlfriend it is in the stand, flashing her engagement ring and her Rolex. I want to see that nano-second when somebody in the VIP box tells Henry Kissinger that his flies are open. I want to know exactly how many Michel Platinis there actually are. He can't be at every game - "They" must have cloned him.

So now that there are less than eight games to play, panic is beginning to set in. What happens between the final whistle of the World Cup and the first chords of the Match of the Day theme? How do I

cope, what do I do? Perhaps Brian Moore won't retire after all but simply replace Trevor McDonald on News at Ten, reading out only the bad news while Ron Atkinson reads out the good.

It has never got to me quite like this before. But then that was the plan, to make football junkies of us all. And that's the ultimate victory for those conducting this vile experiment upon us, because even when there's no football games on any more we will still be able to watch the football adverts instead. We won't be able to stop ourselves. We probably know all their tunes by now and even speak in their catch-phrases. Only the other night I found myself saying to my wife, "Eat football, sleep football, watch football, drink football", just a few seconds before she walked out of the front door with her bags.

QUOTES OF THE DAY

"We are never going to play like Brazilians, there is no point in trying to. We must put faith in our traditional values and then we can beat anyone." Germany's coach, Berti Vogts, on the work ethic of his side.

"It is terrible to have to wait another four years. I wish the next World Cup was in two weeks time, because we are ready." FA Chairman Keith Wiseman.

"For me, England and Holland have been the two most impressive teams. The Dutch are a more gifted group of individuals and will punish our mistakes more clinically than the English did. If an 18-year-old like Michael Owen can expose our lack of pace at the back, then Marc Overmars could tear us apart." Argentina's captain Diego Simeone.

Handwritten signature: JAVIERO

Di Biagio miss puts paid to Italy

By OUR CORRESPONDENT
at Stade de France, St Denis

France
Italy
After extra time: France win 4-3
on penalties
Att: 77,000



THE HOSTS France sweated through to the World Cup semi-finals yesterday as Italy suffered a penalty shoot-out nightmare for the third finals in a row.

Luigi Di Biagio handed France victory by missing the 10th and last penalty, hitting the bar to trigger wild celebrations among the home fans in the Stade de France. France won the shoot-out 4-3 after the match ended 0-0 after extra time.

France's Bixente Lizarazu had seen his attempted shot saved by the Italian goalkeeper Gianluca Pagliuca while the French goalkeeper Fabien Barthez also saved from Demetrio Albertini.

The win was thoroughly deserved by France who should have wrapped up victory well before the shoot-out. They dominated the first 90 minutes but failed to make the most of several clear chances and the mastery of the playmaker Zinedine Zidane, who returned from a two-match suspension.

Italy were penned back in their half for long periods but excellent defence, marshalled by the captain Paolo Maldini, and France's proficiency in front of goal kept the match scoreless in normal time.

France appeared to tire in extra time and the game was far more even. The substitute Roberto Baggio could have won it for Italy late in the first 15 minutes of extra time but his volley went narrowly wide with French goalkeeper Fabien Barthez beaten.

The midfielder Youri Djorkaeff had France's best chance in normal time when he broke clear deep into first-half stoppage time on to a pass from Didier Deschamps. With only Gianluca Pagliuca to beat, he skewed an angled shot wide of the far post. Djorkaeff also had a clear chance saved by Pagliuca late in extra time. Christian Karembeu wasted another great run and pass by Zidane when he shot wide in the 63rd minute.

The French coach, Aimé Jacquet, rang the changes shortly afterwards as France besieged the

Italian goal in search of the winner. David Trézéguet and Thierry Henry came on in the 65th for Stéphane Guivarc'h and Christian Karembeu, but the ball just would not go in for France, who had not lost to Italy in 20 years.

The veteran Pagliuca proved a big obstacle in both halves, saving Italy early in the first half as the crowd roared on every French move and whistled the Italians with equal enthusiasm. The midfielder Emmanuel Petit, with his back to goal, had a dipping shot in the fifth minute brilliantly tipped around the post. A minute earlier, Pagliuca had just got his outstretched fingers to a shot across goal by Zidane.

Zidane was fundamental and behind all the best moves of a French side who were masterful until they came in sight of goal.

Italy, in their familiar blue strip that forced "Les Bleus" into white shirts, had a sniff of goal in the eighth when Francesco Moriero cut inside and crossed to Christian Vieri, the tournament's joint top scorer.

Vieri's header crashed into the side netting and it was a long wait for his next chance, a 34th minute ball at the near post that goalkeeper Barthez got to first.

Italy had barely a chance in the second half as France threatened time and again to settle the match.

Italy had two bookings in the first half, Alessandro Del Piero for a tackle from behind on Didier Deschamps in the 26th minute and Giuseppe Bergomi two minutes later.

The out of sorts Alessandro Del Piero had another poor game and was replaced in the 67th by Roberto Baggio.

Baggio had probably Italy's best chance of the match late in the first half of extra time when his volley from a cross from the right flew past Barthez but also past the far post.

Jacquet said he was exhausted after his side's victory on penalties - and he thought his side could now win the Cup for the first time.

"The French team deserved this victory after our domination of the match," he said. "I feel as if I've been through the wringer."

"I admit it's hard having to go through on penalties. We're going all the way now. We have the means and the boys have the will to go right to the end and live the biggest adventure of them all," Jacquet added.

The Italian coach Cesare Maldini

said: "I am very sad because our players gave it their all. They played so well."

"It's a shame but I would like to underline the great performance my team put in. We leave with our heads held high."

"I can't make any predictions for the rest of the tournament but France are a good team."

The French defender Marcel Desailly said the victory was sensational and he criticised Italy.

"We played well for the whole match, we amply deserve our victory. We moved the ball around while they only used long balls up to [Christian] Vieri."

"The Italians are a bit pretentious saying they've got the best players and the best championship. Now we've finally shown that the French players in Italy are from the top shelf and that the French team is just as strong as theirs."

The French president Jacques Chirac, who watched the match, said: "It's joy after total stress. We played a superb match and we deserved it. It was really the best match that we've played."

Tens of thousands of ecstatic French fans poured on to the streets of Paris last night.

Cars raced through the capital honking their horns while passers-by danced and hugged each other on the Champs-Élysées where large groups of supporters had watched the match on television.

Crowds poured out of cafes and draped blue, white and red tricolour flags over passing vehicles.

"At the end, I was a bit tense," said Sandrine, 27, after the penalty shoot-out. "For me, it was a bit like a horror film."

Hundreds of police were on hand in case the celebrations got out of hand but the atmosphere was good-natured.

In Marseille, car horns could be heard all over the city as supporters greeted their entry into the semifinals.

ITALY: Pagliuca (Internazionale), Bergomi (Internazionale), Maldini (Milan), Cannavaro (Parma), Costacurta (Milan), Pessotto (Juventus), D. Baggio (Parma), Di Biagio (Roma), Moriero (Internazionale), Del Piero (Juventus), Vieri (Atletico Madrid). Substitutes: Albertini (Milan) for D. Baggio, 53; R. Baggio (Bologna) for Del Piero, 67; Di Livio (Juventus) for Pessotto, 90.

France: Barthez (Monaco), Lizarazu (Bayern Munich), Blanc (Marseille), Desailly (Milan), Thuram (Parma), Djorkaeff (Internazionale), Deschamps (Juventus), Zidane (Juventus), Petit (Arsenal), Karembeu (Real Madrid), Guivarc'h (Auxerre). Substitutes: Henry (Monaco) for Karembeu, 65; Trézéguet (Monaco) for Guivarc'h, 65.

Referee: H. Dallas (Scotland).



Fabien Barthez, the French goalkeeper, gets the better of Italy's Christian Vieri at the Stade de France yesterday

De Boer looks to emerge on top

IF THE Netherlands win the World Cup one of the tougher sporting trivia teasers in time would be to name the man who lifted the trophy.

England's Bobby Moore, Germany's Franz Beckenbauer and Argentina's Diego Maradona trip off the tongue. For the Dutch at France 98 the name would be Frank de Boer.

"In terms of leadership we're a lesser team than before. I'm not a

Marco van Basten or a Ronald Koeman," De Boer says.

In today's quarter-final with Argentina watch for him checking others are in the right place and speaking out if necessary. But motivation is not a large part of the current Dutch vocabulary. Off-field, De Boer is merely one of a number of people to whom the coach Guus Hiddink turns.

"A couple of times he's told me the team before the other guys, but there are other people he can talk to, the three assistants for example," De Boer said.

De Boer is partly in the shadows as he is still plays in the Dutch league and is one of the rare breed who will be doing so next season. Of the Dutch 22, 12 already play abroad, five more will leave the Dutch

league next season - six if, as expected, twin brother Ronald de Boer joins the exodus.

Frank's stay at Ajax is not entirely his own choice. At the start of the year, he seemed determined to go. But now he says: "I just can't leave. There were two or three clubs I could have gone to, but Ajax want to keep me. I have to respect that."

My search for Pele, king of the Paris nightclubs

"WOULD YOU like to meet Pele?" he asked. I was in an Irish pub at the time with a view to drowning my sorrows. Not only had I watched one gut-wrenching game which made me vow never to watch another in my life, but on top of that there hadn't been a match for two whole days.

So, naturally, I went to the James Joyce somewhere off the Avenue de la Grande Armée. And, of course, I would like to meet Pele. "Of course I would like to meet Pele," I said. The man is a god. It would be better than meeting Marilyn Monroe. At the same time I couldn't help noticing that the woman standing next to this guy, as we leaned against the bar, might well have passed for Marilyn Monroe by the simple addition of hair dye.

"This is my sister," he said. His name was Kad and she was Sonda and they had a friend called Momo in tow. They were all deeply sorry about what had happened to England and seemed keen to console me.

"I will introduce you to Pele," said Kad. "He is at 'Le Bash'."

"And what is 'Le Bash'?" "You don't know Le Bash? It's only the hottest, hippest nightclub in all Paris. Pele is always there. It's his spot. And the other Brazilians - Ronaldo, for example."

So far I'd only shared a demi-carafe at dinner and followed it with a couple of Kronenbourg and I wasn't so completely



ANDY MARTIN
AT LARGE IN FRANCE



stoned as not to be a shade sceptical. On the other hand, do you throw up the chance of a lifetime just in order to play safe? I was already worrying about my command of Portuguese, but I was relying on Pele to have reasonable English or French or maybe Spanish.

"Come with us, in my car, we're going to Le Bash right now." He was almost as charming as his sister and was, I think, Parisian, but maybe had a touch of the Brazilian about him with his dark complexion and smooth good looks. I got in the back of the car with Sonda.

"OK, we're going to Le Bash now," Kad said as he drove off. A few blocks away we parked again. "Listen, there is a nice little club here, you'll like it, we'll stop here for a few minutes, then we go to Le Bash - is that OK?" Of course it was OK. I was having a great time and Pele wasn't going anywhere, was he? "He's always there," Kad told me firmly, brooking no discussion.

Le Passage was a small, dark, plush boîte, with a guy

playing a synthesizer and singing Elton John songs. We drank some more beers and Sonda had a couple of gin and tonics. Then we danced, the guys with their arms twined around each other's shoulders while Sonda gyrated inside the circle and mambo'd between our legs.

And finally we drank some more. I picked up the tab, which amounted to 560 francs. "I'll get the next round," said Kad, who was doing magic tricks involving a disappearing coin.

"OK, let's go to Le Bash," Kad said for about the hundredth time. So we got back into the car and drove for another few blocks.

"Tiens! Do you know Chez Régine?" asked Kad. "You don't know Chez Régine? Apart from Le Bash, this is the hottest, hippest night club in all Paris." So we went into Chez Régine.

That was dark too, so we had another drink. "It's dead here," said Kad. "Let's go to Le Bash."

It was around four in the morning by now. Kad and Sonda and Momo were still fresh

as larks and just getting into their stride. I was starting to sleepwalk.

"Look, are you sure you really want to go to Le Bash?" I asked.

"Yeah," he said, "but it doesn't really get hot until about four."

We drove off again and, contrary to my fears, finally went to Le Bash, off the Champs Élysées. The guy at the door didn't like the look of me and I don't blame him because I don't much like the look of me at four in the morning either. But Kad smoothed the way, assuring him that I was a good friend of his.

"There, I make you a present of Le Bash," he said. "You will find all the Brazilians there. I promise you."

The place was throbbing. The floor seemed to be actually pulsating beneath your feet, so that even when you weren't dancing you were still dancing. Sonda wandered off with some copine while I scoured the disco and the bars in vain for signs of Pele.

"That's funny," said Kad, "and yet he was here yesterday. I assure you. With Romario."

Eventually I ran into a full-on Brazilian in a suit and tie at the bar, where I was paying 70 francs for a glass of water.

"No, I don't play football," he said, "but my friend here is a movie-director from LA..."

YAP KOON HON, a staff reporter for the "Straits Times", Singapore, gives his verdict on England's exit

"IT TOOK 55 and a half games and 5,000 minutes of football, not counting injury time, for the World Cup to produce the best half. And all it took was one moment of poutish stupidity, a mean-spirited attitude and a one-dimensional referee to produce the worst. The world was robbed

THE GLOBAL GAME

THE WORLD CUP AROUND THE WORLD

of the best game of France 98 on Wednesday because David Beckham, the Spice Boy, could not take it like a man. He retaliated against a cynical Argentine, Diego Simeone, who tackled him, then palmed him back onto the floor when the English lad tried to get up. Simeone's behaviour on the

pitch reminds one of all the dirty, giggling tricks players who call themselves professionals do - spitting, spiteful verbal abuse, falling on opponents, kneeling groins, elbowing, using bodies as treadmill - to bait novices like Beckham into just the sort of rashness that got the toy boy of football

sent off for kicking back in front of the referee. That Simeone offered to make amends with Beckham when he spotted the referee walking towards them is just as disgusting as his two-bit, boot-and-press foul after a crude tackle. Sure, Beckham deserved his red card, but do we need the kind of hypocrisy perpetuated by the Simeones of football? That he is the captain is all the more damning on Argentina."

Italy.

Still Numero Uno (for beer).

Nastro Azzurro would like to congratulate France on their victory and wish them good fortune in the next round. But we'd just like to mention that it's only a game. And we still make the best beer.

Foro's Nastro Azzurro. Italy's Numero Uno Beer.

SPORT

FROM BAD TO KIRSTEN FOR ENGLAND P26 • IVANISEVIC THE MARATHON MAN P24

France's day of sweat and cheers



Thierry Henry (left) and Fabien Barthez celebrate after France's penalty shoot-out victory in their quarter-final against Italy in the Stade de France yesterday. The match had finished goalless Ken Jones, page 30; Reuters/AP

Sampras ends Henman's dream

BY TOMMY STANFORTH



TIM HENMAN'S dream of reaching the Wimbledon final died yesterday when he was beaten by the defending champion, Pete Sampras, in yesterday's semi-finals. Sampras will play Goran Ivanisevic in tomorrow's final. Sampras dropped his first set of the championships before fighting back to beat Henman 6-3 4-6 7-5 6-3 in the men's singles semi-finals.

Sampras cruised through the first set with his serve looking in good order. But Henman, the first British man to reach the semi-finals for 25 years, broke Sampras's ser-

vice twice to take the second set. One break in each of the final two sets was enough to give Sampras the match to the disappointment of a packed crowd enjoying some rare late afternoon sun.

The packed Centre Court crowd were forced to wait somewhat longer than anticipated after the other last-four clash, between Ivanisevic and Richard Krajicek, went to 15-13 in the fifth set before the Croat triumphed.

But just after 4.30pm, the British No 2 emerged with his friend and opponent Pete Sampras, the top seed and defending champion. Henman, the 12th seed, faced an uphill task against the four-time Wimbledon winner.

Yet he was not lacking in support either on or off court, with a large screen set up in Aorangi Park behind Court One to allow those without a Centre Court ticket to follow their hero's progress.

Henman won the toss and decided to serve first, receiving a huge cheer as he won the first point. The 23-year-old held serve well in the opening game, and the first five games consisted of typical grass-court tennis with the server always well on top.

Henman created the first chance

on Sampras' serve in the sixth game as the American put a half-volley into the bottom of the net. But the champion responded to the threat in the best possible style, firing down a booming ace to get back to deuce before levelling the score at 3-3.

The difference between the world No 1 and the player ranked 17 places below him then became glaringly apparent in the next game when Henman faced his first break point.

While Sampras had raised his game at the key moment, Henman faltered badly, a double-fault at 30-

40 giving his opponent a crucial break.

Sampras then held serve with ease and wrapped up the set with another break of Henman's serve courtesy of a backhand return winner down the line as he took advantage of a short second delivery.

The crowd had been stunned into near-silence by the first set but Henman finally gave them something to cheer about as he found his feet in the second. Sampras had held serve to love in the first game of the set but Henman levelled before pro-

ducing his best tennis of the match so far. A superb lob followed by a backhand winner down the line gave him three break points, and although one was saved with an ace, Sampras put a half-volley just wide to give Henman a 2-1 lead.

From looking completely in control in the first set, Sampras, bidding to equal Rod Laver's five Wimbledon titles, suddenly looked human - and Henman took full advantage.

The British No 2 forced another break of serve helped by a superb forehand winner from almost outside the tramlines - and it proved vital.

A double-fault - Henman's Achilles heel - gifted Sampras an immediate break back but Henman gathered himself to serve out for the

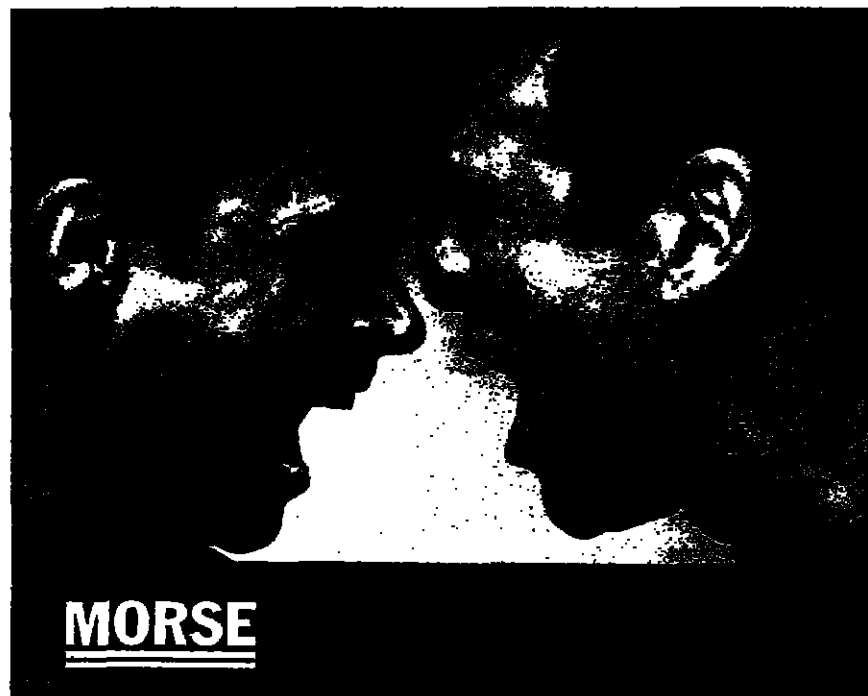
set, becoming the first player to take a set off the defending champion in this year's championships.

Henman saved a break point in the sixth game with a textbook serve and volley, and held his next two service games well when serving to stay in the third set.

But Sampras kept up the pressure as he kept his nose in front and served out to love for a 6-5 lead.

And the tension finally told on Henman in an epic 12th game. Twice he saved set points with commendable nerve but Sampras would not be denied. A blistering cross-court backhand on his third set point forced an error from Henman, who put his volley into the top of the net to lose the set 5-7.

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Just for a moment, forget the football.

Instead, think about the sheer scale of World Cup 98. Issuing 2.5 million tickets. Co-ordinating 50,000 employees and volunteers. Providing information and resources for 12,000 journalists. Creating a web site to deal with up to 160 million visitors every day. Imagine the IT infrastructure needed to support this.

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WEEKEND REVIEW

COMMENT • FEATURES • ARTS • SHOPPING • TRAVEL



American dreamers

This evening, buoyed by a morning of patriotic processions, exhausted by an afternoon's baseball and sated with chicken and ribs from their barbecues, Americans will flop down in front of their outside television sets for a few hours of rest and recreation. But they could be in for a surprise. In place of the variegated mindlessness that passes for so much televised entertainment, they may alight on the Discovery Channel and a stirring five-hour epic that is all about themselves. It is the story of the American dream, through the lives of some who dreamed.

American Stories: The American Dream is the saga of 10 families over three generations who believe in the possibility of a better future. Some are born American - to wealth or poverty; some become American - by immigration and naturalisation; and some have America virtually thrust upon them (as descendants of slaves or refugees). The American Dream is what they have in common.

Among them are the Manoffs. The grandfather, Kalman, was one of the million Russians who left their homeland in 1905 and arrived penniless at Ellis Island. He delivers fresh food on a horse and cart around Manhattan and sets up some of the first delicatessens. His son, Dick, by now thoroughly Americanised and an all-out enthusiast for the New World, goes to college and into business for himself.

Dick Manoff unerringly catches each new trend, overcoming post-war anti-semitism to succeed in the embryonic advertising industry, and he grows rich. His son, Gregg, realises his father's ambitions for him and makes it to Harvard. The glittering prizes await.

The Wolfords of Arkansas were dirt-poor. Three generations on, they're oil-rich. Theirs is a story that will warm the heart of every freedom-loving (and TV watching) US citizen this Fourth of July. It's a story they need to believe. It's the story of the American dream

Of the other families, the majority "make it" in America. There is Jae-Yul Kim, whose long-standing ambition is to enjoy the beneficence of the United States, the land of cowboy movies. He arrives after the end of the Korean war and starts as a janitor in New York, living "like a dog" in his basement. After scrimping for five years, he moves to California.

Eventually, he has saved enough to rent his own apartment and bring over his wife and children. They have exchanged letters and forlorn, love-sick drawings for almost a decade. A failed machine-shop project almost convinces them to give up and go home, but a farewell trip to the Grand Canyon - where else? - inspires them to persist. Soon, they are prospering with a supermarket of their own in South Central Los Angeles, their own house, and weekend golf.

Then there is Alfredo Vea, a Mexican born into an immigrants' transit camp in Arizona, who is drafted to serve in Vietnam and benefits from the GI Bill to become a successful lawyer serving the Hispanic community in San Francisco. General Baker (General is his first name), the eighth child of Georgian share-croppers, grandchild of slaves, leaves the South to prosper on the car assembly lines of boomtown Detroit. His son goes to college and joins the civil rights movement.

And Gerald Wolford of Arkansas, whose parents lose everything in the dustbowl of the Thirties and move to an inhospitable California. Gerald, though, becomes a truck-driver and mechanic, who prospers in the American oil boom of the Seventies, when he can earn the fabulous sum of \$200,000 a year.

The well-born also flourish. Endicott "Chub" Peabody, born into one of the oldest families of New England, is the embodiment of Old World privilege implanted into the New. At once inspired and weighed down by the responsibilities of high birth, he rises inexorably through school, college sports, marriage (to the daughter of the Governor of Bermuda) and Wall Street, to become Democratic

Governor of Massachusetts and a member of Lyndon Johnson's presidential team.

John Gage, son of the pioneer of America's aerospace industry, almost makes the national swimming team, before drifting through Vietnam protests, unfinished degrees and casual jobs. He then leaps, by dint of contacts, personal enterprise and vision, into the beginnings of Silicon Valley.

It is here, after a couple of hours of solemn and high-flown commentary, that American viewers might expect the epic to conclude, fading out in a fanfare of triumph. The tale, that anyone - high-born, low-born, man or woman, black, white or yellow - can realise the "American dream", would have been told. The point would be proved. Over to you, the voiceover would shout: be all that you can be, and God bless America!

American Stories: The American Dream, however, is a documentary with a difference. It was conceived and produced by a British company, Atlantic Productions, with a track-record of making documentaries about America. There is that slight crit-

ical distance, the tendency to pause for the phrase beyond the ready American cliché, that marks it as the work of outsiders: sympathetic outsiders, to be sure, but observers rather than believers. And there is a message that emerges: the American Dream is not everything it is cracked up to be. Not everyone "makes it" in America, not everyone prospers. In some ways, the dream is as effective an opiate of the people as religion ever was.

Gregg Manoff, the son of the super-successful New York advertising director, invents a psychiatric problem to avoid the draft and becomes a hippie. He breaks with his father and "hangs out" in the back streets of lower Manhattan, where his grandfather first started out in America. His father's lifestyle is a source almost of disgust: "There was a sense of a great emptiness at the core of that life," he says. "I knew enough not to buy into that."

The Kims lose everything in the Los Angeles riots of 1982. No one told them, they say with pathos, of the bubbling resentment of blacks in South-Central LA. They "start over" with debts that will burden them into their eighties. Gerald Wolford fails to foresee the end of the oil boom. He loses his trucks, his cars, and the spacious log house that epitomised his dream. He is back in the trailer park where he began: he moved 150 feet in 37 years, he says ruefully.

General Baker jr has also come full circle. After spells of unemployment, he went back to the assembly line where his father worked. Now, his step-daughter, Jackie, a college graduate, works there. Then, he says sanguinely, it looked like the worst of options. Now it looks like the best. Jackie, for her

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						TRAVEL



In the final image from our series on Pym Farm in Tovil, Kent, a woman shearer gathers up a fleece – sheep shearing is not just men's work

Rui Xavier

Lawrence killing

Sir: The lesson of Howard Youngerwood's evidence to the Lawrence inquiry is not that Stephen Lawrence's parents "wrecked all future prospects of the killers being brought to justice" (report, 2 July).

It is that the legal system failed so badly that the parents were left with no other way to pursue the case except a private prosecution. That failure included the Crown Prosecution Service, for which Mr Youngerwood seeks to defend his case management.

He argued that there were "future prospects" of bringing suspects to justice. Given the indifference and incompetence the Lawrences had to endure from the police, it is hard to see how anyone in his position could have expected them to believe in such prospects from the system that had failed so badly.

The Lawrences brought their prosecution in the hope of achieving justice for their murdered son. It failed, for legal reasons which may or may not have been well founded. But public outrage at the evident denial of justice to the Lawrences led to the current inquiry. Without their courage in taking the risk of a private prosecution, I believe the matter would have been buried.

The inquiry secured by the Lawrences has exposed the disgraceful way in which the case was handled by the police. It will be a memorial for their son if their determination and their team's work lead to a system of justice which serves all of us better.

JOHN NORRIS
Richmond upon Thames
Surrey

Sir: In your leading article of 2 July you use the oft-quoted statistic that ethnic minorities comprise 25 per cent of those stopped and searched by police but only 8 per cent of the general population. You argue that the disparity implies insidious racism pervading the police.

However this is not a fair

statistic to quote, because very few of "the population" ever expose themselves to being searched. For example, the police do not waste their time stopping commuters pouring across London Bridge in the morning. Any crimes they may have committed are unlikely to result in their having evidence about their persons. Equally, the people coming out of Regents Park Mosque are unlikely to have done anything wrong at all.

Police will only stop the subset of the population who may have committed a crime of which they are likely to find evidence. A possible example of a class of persons in this group might be young men on the streets late at night. The statistic you should quote is the proportion of people who meet these criteria who are from ethnic minorities. It may be greater or less than 6 per cent, but I bet it is different.

MA WILLIAMS
Tonbridge, Kent

Sir: You write about making the five youths cleared of the murder of Stephen Lawrence "pay for their crime". You advocate "any legal action which helps to ruin their lives". You call them "murderers" (leading article, 2 July).

British justice demands evidence of guilt. A Crown Prosecution lawyer said the evidence was "hopeless". You have no evidence to back your vindictive language.

No matter how much your sensitivities may be offended by the way the five youths look, think and talk, it is not evidence of guilt, and to continue to hound them on this basis is vindictive, hateful and entirely alien to the British moral

and legal tradition. The media has created a circus and appears intent on perpetrating a lynching. This affects us all.

ALISTAIR D McCONNACHIE
Edinburgh

Sir: Your leading article of 2 July could not have been more wrong. The Lawrence case does not damage race relations, whatever that notion might mean; the case merely reveals what the majority of Black people already know, that if a Black person is murdered their death is seen as less serious or important than the death of a white person. The evidence of the inquiry will not cause many Black people to be critical of the police. Indeed, the fact that Neville and Doreen Lawrence have had the strength to pursue this case gives comfort to those who wish to see policing and the whole judicial system fair and even-handed.

LINDA BELLOS
London SE15

English whinge

Sir: We've seen the hooligans; now meet the whingers. Take your pick of the reasons for England's World Cup demise: Beckham, Batty, referees, cheating Argies, FIFA, French police, North African youths, ticket touts, Mediterranean heat, availability of alcohol, non-availability of alcohol.

Twenty thousand Scots went to France, watched their team being eliminated and in the process did their utmost to drink Bordeaux and St Etienne dry. Response? Great party: thanks for having us, we'll try again next time.

JIM KINCAID
Nottingham

Sir: Your leading article "National pride – and dishonour" (2 July) poses an antithesis which is partly false. On the one hand it praises "the overwhelming majority of [football] fans who behaved with boisterous good humour", but on the other damns the "loutishness" of the hooligans who disgraceful not just soccer and cricket but the market towns of England on a typical Saturday night.

However, some of those in the first group are on occasion to be found in the second, and vice-versa. Distinguishing loutishness from boisterousness is often a matter of vantage point.

Of course there is a serious problem, but one will get nowhere addressing it on the basis of your simple assertion that hooliganism is merely "the natural consequence of the alcoholic, nationalistic, violent spirit that typifies so much of British life".

I seem to remember that in my days at Cambridge the alcoholic, nationalistic and violent excesses which typified so much undergraduate roistering were excused as the inevitable fruit of youthful high-spirits.

ANDREW PHILLIPS
Sudbury, Suffolk

Air traffic fears

Sir: Your article "Mayhem in the sky" (30 June) seemed to be designed to frighten the travelling public, quite unnecessarily, by overdramatising a single incident in one particular part of the UK's air traffic control (ATC) system.

We have one of the safest ATC systems in the world. This is demonstrated by our safety record. Moreover, if there were any serious

doubts about the safety of the system the first people to complain would be the commercial pilots and airlines who are the major users of our services. Yet a recent survey has shown that our standing with our airline customers is higher than ever before.

Everyone involved in the ATC business works very hard to ensure that safety standards are maintained. As regards the incident on 28 April, your article made no mention of the fact that, despite the very unusual weather conditions on that day, with low-visibility procedures in operation at Heathrow and thunderstorms disrupting traffic flows throughout the London area, the professionalism and skill of our air traffic controllers ensured that they were able to handle a difficult situation extremely well. Not one loss of separation between aircraft occurred and not a single aircraft proximity incident was filed.

The UK's safety record is second to none and we intend to keep it that way.

WILLIAM K SEMPLE
Chief Executive
National Air Traffic Services
London WC2

Rail rage

Sir: You report that the Association of Train Operating Companies claims that the privatised railways are more likely to respond to complaints ("Rail companies to face instant fines", 2 July). This is not my experience.

I was one of the 82,361 who complained about Great North Eastern Railways. My complaint was about staff rudeness and overcrowding. The response was

that I should make reservations. This I have been doing, only to find that the trains I have a seat reserved on are frequently cancelled. This has happened no less than five times in the past two weeks. Needless to say, I have complained again. It has now been over three months since my initial complaint, and I still await a satisfactory response.

HARRY ALBRIGHT
Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

Art in the bunker

Sir: You report a curator of the East Berlin Museum remarking that paintings "dumped in the museum's own bunkers had survived the war in better condition than the ones they had tried hardest to save" ("Picture of unity thrills German art world", 2 July). This is not altogether surprising.

Pictures from the National Gallery were housed during the war in specially constructed air-conditioned huts in a cave in Wales. The then director, Kenneth (Lord) Clark, recalled: "We were very proud of it and in order to show how essential it was to the wellbeing of pictures, we left one valuable work outside in the saturated cave. At the end of the war it was rather healthier than the pictures which had been coddled by air-conditioning in their huts."

When air-conditioning was introduced to the National Gallery after the war, Uccello's *Battle of San Romano* was selected to benefit from the new system. In the words of Clark's successor, Sir Philip Hendy: "There it was hoped that it would appreciate the relaxing atmosphere." Alas, it did

not. "After four years the panel was giving some cause for anxiety. [It] was evidently not settling down." It then underwent a long and painful restoration which left it, in the view of Sir John Pope Hennessy and others, "over-cleaned".

It would seem that environmental stability and freedom from restorers' attentions are prerequisites for healthy pictures.

MICHAEL DALEY
ArtWatch UK
East Barnet, Hertfordshire

IN BRIEF

Sir: Chris Johnson's suggests (letter, 3 July) that there is a similar argument for climbing and mountaineering to be taught in schools along with swimming. However, most accidents in the hills involve relatively minor and easily survivable limb injuries: sprains, strains and fractures, usually caused by a simple slip. Drowning is almost invariably fatal. Accident reporting by mountain rescue teams shows that only too often what needs to be taught is actually common sense: choice of equipment, clothing and footwear; choice of route; sensible appreciation of personal fitness; attention to the weather.

MARCUS BROWN
Association of Mountaineering
Instructors
Deganwy, Gwynedd

Sir: I write with reference to the trouser ("Why men don't iron", *ISM*, 27 June). In addition to the basic fore-and-aft or thwartships options to which the Weasel refers, there is a particularly elegant finish which is also produced exclusively by the male iron. The "fluted column" effect is achieved by ensuring that, each time the trousers are ironed, the crease in the leg lies parallel to the previous one. I hope you will experiment.

DUNCAN FORBES
Mansfield College
Oxford

American Dreamers

Continued from page one

part, is now a single mother. The father of her three-year-old daughter, Jasmine, was stabbed to death: another victim of black gangland. As she says of her predicament: "My American dream has altered. It's more that Jasmine gets what she deserves – food in her stomach, a roof over her head."

Alfredo Vea may look as though he has made it. But he is scarred forever by Vietnam. In a shocking sequence that jerks the attention, he gazes into an idyllic Californian sunset and muses about giving the order to a B-52 to rain bombs on the nearby city of Oakland. He just wants people to see what it was like.

This is another view of the American Dream altogether, and one that introduces a note of dissonance into the patriotic complacency of the Fourth of July. For it poses awkward questions that many Americans have hardly begun to address, starting with the most basic: can everyone succeed in America?

There are, to be sure, the spectacular successes like Dick Manoff, who is a model for the immigrant's dream of America. His son has now returned as far into the mainstream as he is ever likely to get, working as a rural doctor amid the natu-

ral splendour of New Mexico. He has married a Southern Baptist, adopted a son who is Bengali and fathered another son. Grandfather Dick is delighted with his all-American family.

John Gage, too, has found his metier. He is happily married to a successful television journalist, and is one of the most successful entrepreneurs in America as a director of Sun Microsystems. For him, the Internet is "the ultimate expression of the American dream" that is now "the global dream". "Chub" Peabody lost a race for the Senate, but hardly lives less comfortably as a result. The inescapable impression is that even in America the rule is: to those who have is given, while from those who have not is taken even what they have.

There are common delights – the first car, the new children's toys, the first television set, the first house, the first kiss – but these shared experiences pale into insignificance beside the sharp and seemingly inevitable reversals of fortune suffered by the have-nots, especially – it seems – by the black families.

There is a bitterness here that is rarely heard publicly in America and would probably not have been communi-

cated to a white American interviewer. General Baker snr dismisses the whole idea of the American Dream. "I never believed in it," he says and adds that of the great American "cake": "I don't want my goddamn crumb, I want my equal slice, like the white guys get."

If there were no blacks, he asks, "would the white people have another group they would be treating this way? Do they have to have someone to look down to? I don't know."

For Americans, who tend to look ever forward, not back to the past or sideways (except in charity) to their contemporaries in other walks of life, this kaleidoscope of mixed fortunes, separation and social division may come as a shock. It calls into question some of the most basic tenets of America. Is it a classless society? Is it open to everyone?

"You see so many problems and glass ceilings," says the executive producer, Anthony Geffen. While recognising that the "dream" has provided Americans with "an inbuilt starter-motor" that seems "almost to sustain them from generation to generation", he would dearly like to encourage them to take a closer look – "to look back and see what hap-



Left: General Baker senior. 'I dismiss the idea of the American Dream'; right: General Baker junior and family



pened when they all started out with that idea... so that there's a genuine melting pot and they don't fake it."

So long as a poor boy from a broken

home in Hope, Arkansas, can rise to become President, the American dream – however insubstantial – will live on. The more sceptical, meanwhile, should perhaps

ponder the question that Geffen put rhetorically to me: "If these people had come to Britain, would they be where they are now?"

THE INDEPENDENT

1 CANADA SQUARE, CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 5DL TELEPHONE: 0171 293 2000 OR 0171 345 2000 FAX: 0171 293 2435 OR 0171 345 2435
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A great engine of equality, a service to treasure

WE WERE going to celebrate 50 years of the National Health Service tomorrow, but unfortunately the anniversary has been delayed due to staff shortages and a lack of beds. We have been put on a waiting list and will now be celebrating the event in 18 months' time. Yes, it is easy to be sour about the NHS - and yet it is an institution which is more secure in the affections of the British public than any other.

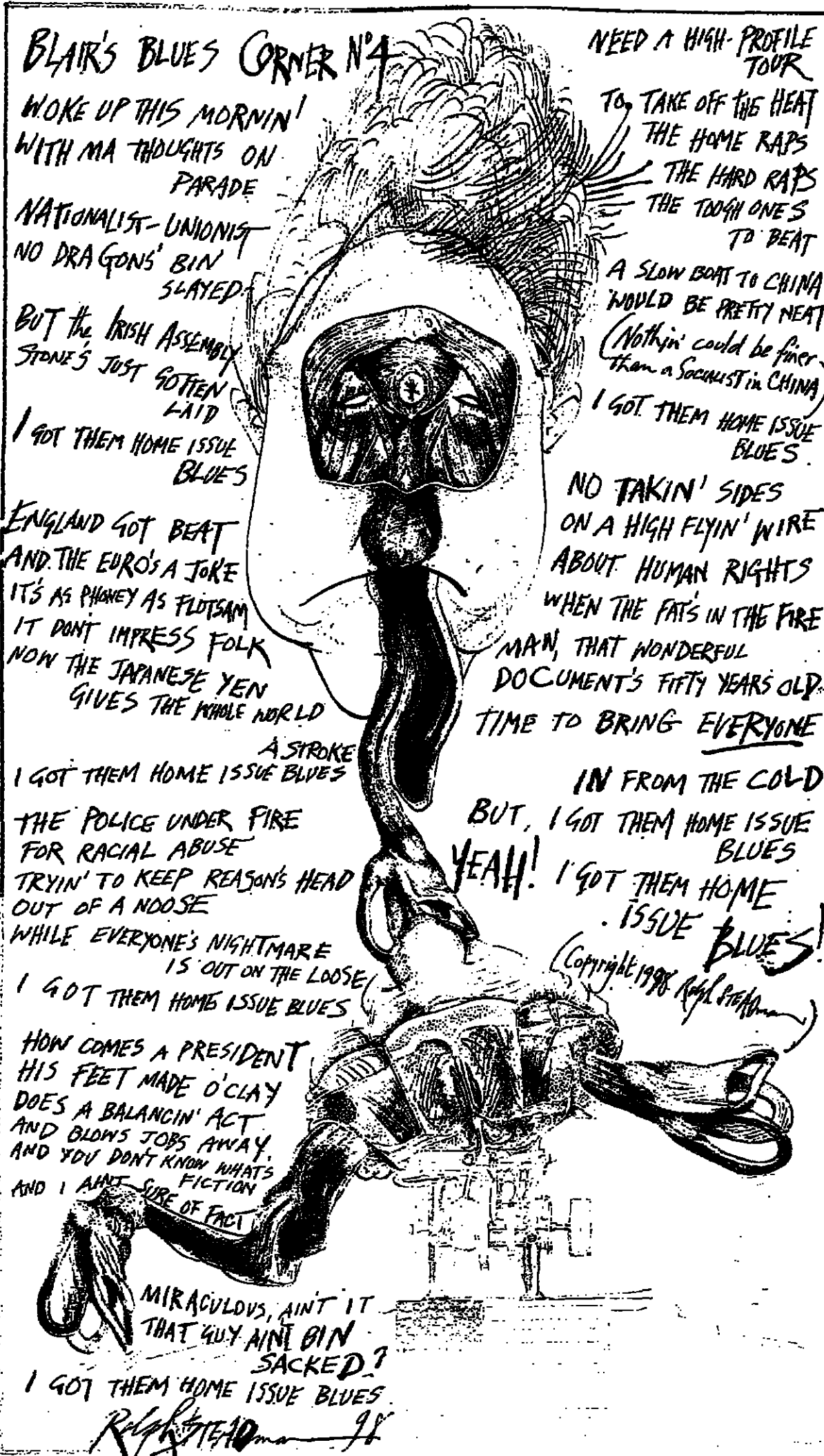
There is a simple and justified reason why the NHS is so popular, and this deserves to be remembered amid the endless carping about how it has failed to eradicate inequalities in health. For the past half-century, the health service has been one of the greatest engines of equality in British society. For all its defects, we would be a much less equal society without it. You do not have to be a socialist to celebrate this fact, although socialists like Barbara Castle, who writes in *The Independent* today, have every reason to be particularly proud of it. Regardless of ideology, it is right that no one should fear illness because of the cost. For this reason alone, the NHS should be a source of pride in Britain.

The question is how to maintain and defend this achievement in a country which is three times richer than in 1948, and in which increasing taxes is no longer politically cost-free. This is because the obvious solution to the present troubles of the NHS would be simply to raise taxes in order to cut waiting times, improve case management and stop the worst examples of trolleys in corridors, cancelled operations and nationwide searches for a spare bed.

In a sense, that is what the Government is doing. When the spending review is announced next week, a mind-numbingly large number will appear in the "extra spending over the next three years" column next to the health service. But it will only be enough to extend the long Conservative run in which NHS spending was increased by an average of 3 per cent a year more than inflation, and which means health spending now is 70 per cent more in real terms than it was in 1979. With that record, the Tories were widely perceived as "running down the health service".

But to live up to its reputation as Defender of the NHS Faith, Labour comes up against the limits of "tax and spend", which is not a self-imposed or unnecessary constraint invented by Tony Blair. No matter that people tell pollsters that they really, really would not mind paying extra taxes for the NHS - they will not trust any government to spend any tax rise wisely. And what cannot be avoided is the need to raise extra funding. The Labour Party needs to shed its narrow-minded objection to getting private money into the NHS.

On grounds of efficiency and equity, the option of moving to an insurance-based system should be rejected. But all other options should be considered. We need to have an informed debate about cutting the cost of drugs, about charging for doctor's visits and about concentrating resources in centres of excellence, even if this does result in the closing of much-loved local hospitals. But we also need to do more to break down the culture of deference towards doctors and give people the confidence to demand more of the NHS. The "doctor knows best" ethos certainly got us through the first 50 years, but it will not ensure the survival of a universal, tax-funded service for the next 50.



Lessons of our search for the origins of man

EAST AND South Africa are competing with each other in their claim to be the real Garden of Eden, the original home of humankind. Which is right does not matter very much, but the search for the answer to the question "Who are we?" holds some important lessons.

Charles Darwin himself, sensible to the revolutionary consequences of his theory to Christian thought, avoided drawing conclusions about human ancestry. From the beginning, the advance of knowledge about the origin of our particular species has had to overcome unreason and prejudice. We did not easily take to the idea of being descended from apes. Once we understood better our place in the animal kingdom, there was a great deal of resistance among whites to the idea of being descended from black people. It was long assumed that homo sapiens had originated in Asia, and it was 25 years after the first discoveries in Africa in the 1920s before it was generally accepted that the "dark continent" was our ancestral home.

One of the few places which found this particularly difficult to accept was apartheid South Africa, and the significance of this week's conference in Sun City is that it marks the opening up of South Africa to the search for humanity's origins.

South African paleontologists and geologists have now joined the race to sort out those awkward bits of human history over the past two million years.

The effect of our understanding of the theory of evolution transformed our view of our place in the universe. Let us hope that recent advances will help promote greater understanding of our relations with our fellow humans.

What is important about recent breakthroughs in evolution is how new homo sapiens are. Anatomically modern humans - that is, us - first appeared a mere 100,000 to 200,000 years ago. We now know much more about the various human-like branches of the evolutionary tree which died out.

In a week in which we have seen the black separatist Nation of Islam parading on our front pages, it is salutary to remember that the differences between races are utterly insignificant.

Louis Farrakhan's unpleasant ideology, holding a mirror to apartheid, should be rejected categorically - as, of course, should be the racism of the suspects in the Stephen Lawrence killing. Whatever the colour of our skins, the amount of genetic variability among humans is very small indeed. We are, in a very real sense, in this together.

Heavens above

IF WE believe the Church of England, we are living in more spiritual times. This accounts for the rising number of clergy being ordained and the growing number of theology students, which we report today. On the face of it, the new trend is rather surprising. But there are a number of possible explanations.

Perhaps more women are signing up now that the door has been unlocked. All it would take is the first woman bishop, and the clergy could suddenly become, like primary school teaching, an overwhelmingly female profession. Then there are the darkening clouds over the jobs market. The starting salary might be only £14,090, but that is a lot better than the minimum wage and comes with free accommodation.

But even a secular newspaper like *The Independent* is not going to look a gift horse in the mouth. Heavens above! Vicars are social glue, so let us have more of them.

The hope that lurks behind those burning churches and voodoo drums

ON LONG summer evenings the rattle of the drums carried from the Orange halls of South Belfast up into the small terraced streets that extend beyond the southern boundaries of Queens University. A newcomer to the city sat night after night in my attic room and listened to the strange tattoo, counting out the time before the drummers would lay down their sticks and head for the pub or home.

This was the sound of an unfamiliar country and every night when it finished I felt unsettled as if I had been sent a message but lacked the tribal language to understand it. The effect was part magical, part menacing. The poet Louis MacNeice once brilliantly described as the "voodoo of the Orange drums flailing through the limbo of the linen lands".

In those early days I kept my distance from the marches. I found other stories to occupy my attentions. And then one evening I was dispatched to the town of Ballynahinch in County Down where sectarian tensions were running high because of loyalist plans to march through a Catholic estate. The area consisted of a small cul-de-sac occupied almost entirely by Catholics.

I watched the march with a Catholic family from the bedroom window of their home. The small parade duly arrived and headed down into the cul-de-sac. There were shouts and jeers. And then a bottle sailed through the window of the bed-



FERGAL KEANE

The idea was obvious - strut your stuff and remind Shamuis who's in charge

room where I was standing. There were screams and panic as glass flew across the room. I remember somebody shouting "bastards" and then the woman of the house rushed into the street to confront the leader of the mob. As it turned out he was one of Dr Ian Paisley's DUP councillors. "You're not welcome here, you're not welcome here," the woman shouted. There was some jostling and then the marchers moved off. They had made their point for another year.

This was not an unusual occurrence. Everybody involved understood what was happening and why. To the outsider, the idea of a Protestant march heading into this area was impossible to understand. But in pure sectarian terms, it was blindingly obvious. Strut your

stuff and remind Shamuis who is in charge.

In the year since that night in Ballynahinch many marching seasons have come and gone. With each summer the tension predictably rises. There are riots small and large, petrol bombings, burnings of churches and of Orange halls, beatings and killings. It is by any rational reckoning a season of suffering. Not just for nationalists but for the broad community of the same who want to escape sectarianism.

It may well be that in the next two months we will see yet another round of trouble. The burning of Catholic churches and the bitterness over Drumcree suggest that whatever the majority feels about the Good Friday Agreement, there are plenty of people who want nothing to do with tolerance. But the shouting and burning should not detract from the substance of political progress.

Back at the time of my night in Ballynahinch, unionism was galvanising itself to defeat the Anglo Irish Agreement. The two major parties and the loyalist paramilitaries were threatening chaos. But that campaign - with its mass meetings and strikes, with all its riots and attacks on the police - eventually died away. The serious thinkers within unionism recognised that the unthinkable would have to be contemplated: Dublin and Sinn Fein would have to be part of the solution. When unionist leaders traditionally spoke of the "people

of Ulster", they were really using code for the Protestant people. Today, the Ulster Unionists have in David Trimble a leader who is prepared to articulate a more inclusive vision of the future. And he is risking everything to do this.

With the hard liners breathing down his neck, Mr Trimble will have more reason than most to regard the marching season with foreboding. The sight of Orange heads being thumped by policemen or soldiers would almost certainly send a few of Mr Trimble's more doubtful colleagues scampering into the arms of the hard liners and seriously undermine the future of the agreement.

It is difficult for many in the nationalist community to contemplate turning the other cheek and allowing marchers to pass through contested areas. The collective memory of subjugation and Orange triumphalism has created a powerful imperative to resist. What they may ask is: what is the point in having power sharing when we have the memory of ancient defeats rubbed in our faces every summer?

It is a fair question ... up to a point. But try looking at it another way. By forcing the blocking or re-routing of marchers, could nationalism not well end up giving the kiss of life to the forces of die-hard unionism. Every contentious march is a potential rallying point for Mr Trimble's enemies. And if he comes down, the whole deal



Last year's Drumcree march

Alan Lewis

comes down. He cannot say so openly: he may not even want to say it, but what David Trimble really needs is the help of Gerry Adams.

The Sinn Fein leader has proved adept at making tough decisions palatable within the ranks of republicanism. Mr Adams knows that he is in a strong position. Only he and Sinn Fein have enough clout to persuade Catholics in flash points areas that, in this time of peril for David Trimble, it might be wiser, albeit painful, to stand back and look to the longer game. By acting as a conciliator, Gerry Adams could help to ease the pressure building around Mr Trimble on the decommissioning issue.

If the Ulster Unionists' leader can deliver for his supporters on marches, he will surely be in a better position to compromise when it comes to decommissioning and the issue of Sinn Fein's presence in cabinet. The Nationalists will ex-

pect movement from Mr Trimble and look for signs that he is preparing his people for change.

This marching season can be different not because it promises an outbreak of mutual respect, nor because it promises to be any less violent than others. It is different because the political context has changed so radically. For the first time in a generation substance has the chance to take precedence over symbolism. The power sharing Assembly is a tangible triumph of reason.

The temptation when we see images like the burnt Catholic churches will be to despair and say that the tribes are back at each others' throats. But that is not the truth of the matter. Yes hatred is alive and well and will be for years to come. But the politics of compromise is taking root. That is the choice of the brave and, more importantly these days, it is the choice of the majority.

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MONITOR

THE NEWS OF THE WORLD

Clinton in China • The World Cup • Northern Ireland • Lawrence Inquiry • Falling Rand • Grease

CLINTON IN CHINA

Responses to President Bill Clinton's
landmark trip to ChinaTHE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD
Australia

Before getting too excited, it is worth asking a few questions. What is likely to have the most impact on ordinary Chinese - Clinton condemning the Tiananmen Square massacre on television or footage of him reviewing an honor guard of troops loyal to the regime that ordered the massacre at the site where it occurred? Who benefits from Clinton's pleas for religious tolerance - Christians and Buddhists subject to harassment and imprisonment in China, or China's leaders, who would like to sink a bill in the US Congress which would impose sanctions on any country engaging in religious persecution?

CATHOLIC HERALD
UK

Cynics may view the latest developments in China as having been spurred on by the promise of mutual economic benefits with the US. If materialism is the only beneficiary of this change, then the victory of the West's values will be hollow. If Christianity is released from the shackles of atheistic ideology, then freedom will truly have arrived.

THE SUNDAY TIMES
UK

As in classical Chinese painting, what is most important in the modern Sino-American summit is the blank space - what is not achieved. Thus a grand but vacuous Sino-American summit - with some plain speaking from Clinton - can be judged a great success. But this will be merely one part of a longer-term process of engaging China and helping it to become a more co-operative player in international affairs. China is nothing more than a second-rate power with the ability to push around third or fourth-rate powers, such as the Philippines. And it is puffed up when against a first-rate power such as the United States.

THE STRAITS TIMES
Singapore

History reasserts itself with relations between China and the United States restored to an even keel, an achievement for which both presidents deserve full credit. For a visit that was fiercely opposed by some, and dismissed out of hand by others, Mr Clinton's tour can claim impressive gains. That would not have been possible if he and his administration had not been courageous enough to defy domestic critics and take a mature view of US responsibilities in Asia. Nor would it have been possible if Mr Jiang Zemin had not felt secure enough in his leadership to take Deng Xiaoping's philosophy so much further along a logical but difficult road.

DETROIT NEWS
United States

The long-term effect of Clinton's China trip can't be judged with any accuracy, but we have little doubt that American interests are being well-served. Using American leverage to speak frankly about democratic values can only encourage China's political as well as economic reformers. And once such discussions begin, they are hard to stop. Well done, Mr President.

Beckham has youth, looks, fame - and now dishonour

LIBERATION
France

David Beckham has everything going for him. His youth, he's 23; his undeniable talent; his pretty face; his wealth and his celebrity thanks to his coupling with one of the Spice Girls. Because of all this, Beckham was one of Britain's most eligible men, a dubious honour in a country where normally sensitive young men can puff up like a sail in the winds of fashion. But, this honour is no more.

DAILY TELEGRAPH

Beckham's silly little, smart little kick at his Argentinian opponent was what's wrong with the national character. This Gaultier-saronged, Posh Spiced, Cooled

THE WORLD CUP
Verdicts on England's exit
from France 98

Britannia, look-at-me, what-a-lad, loadsamoney, sex-and-shopping, fame-schooled, daytime-TV, over-coiffed twerp did not, of course, mean any harm. Like almost everything stupid that makes English life less fun than it should and could be, it was only "mess-ing about". As always, other people have to clear up the mess.

THE TIMES

This, ultimately, was an anticlimax of a tournament for England, an anticlimax saved only by the melodramatic manner

of the defeat. Beckham's foolishness diverted any criticism that might have been aimed at Hoddle on to himself. But his ability to recover from that criticism will be crucial to the fruition of the seeds of hope that began to sprout in that first half against Argentina.

THE GUARDIAN

Are the English so insecure these days that they need to read great tropes of national identity and fortune into the accidents of a single sporting contest. There's something odd about the hunger to over-interpret the event, to load with deep significances the players and their foibles and the exigencies of play. We mustn't confuse the sociological observation that people have a

need for common symbols and shared points of reference with some wild equation of national character and prowess in this sport during this competition on that evening.

NEWSDAY
US

Talk about bad timing. Adidas took out full-page ads in national newspapers in England with a close-up picture of midfielder David Beckham - the day before he was ejected in the World Cup game against Argentina. Plastered across his face were the words: "After tonight, England vs Argentina will be remembered for what a player did with his feet." Well, that's exactly what happened.

IRELAND

Responses to the first
elections for Northern
Ireland's assembly

BELFAST TELEGRAPH

Mr Trimble has to transform himself from an effective but abrasive party leader into a Prime Minister for all the people, putting the interests of both communities above either unionist or nationalist. He and Mr Mallon deserve the fairest of winds for the almost superhuman jobs they have been given, to lead Northern Ireland into a host of new and binding relationships, while attempting to reconcile two communities still suffering from their recent pasts. No two people are better equipped to succeed.

THE TIMES

The biggest looming difficulty is the Orange parade in Drumcree this Sunday. The march itself may seem a curious relic to other citizens of the United Kingdom. But at a time of change in the life of the Province, those with a deep emotional allegiance to the Union cling all the more fiercely to these expressions of their identity.

THE IRISH TIMES

Sinn Fein should well empathise with Mr Trimble's difficulties. On many an occasion, over the years of stumbling towards the political path, they needed - and were given - a helping hand by others. It will be revealing to see if they possess the generosity - or even the enlightened self-interest - to give David Trimble what he needs to convince his people that he is leading them in the right direction.

DIE WELT
Germany

Opponents of the Peace Process, the people who have been responsible for the bloody troubles of the past 30 years, have learnt nothing. Ulster can only find peace when both sides are ready for it. That is why it is not wrong to demand that Sinn Fein, the political arm of the IRA, renounce violence without ifs and buts. And it is unacceptable that the IRA should use the graves of the dozen or so civilians it had killed as a political football.

FALLING RAND

South African verdicts on
the economic difficulties
caused by the falling
value of the rand

CAPE ARGUS

Last year, when the rand was relatively stable compared with many emerging markets, SA exporters lost ground to competitors. Now some of this advantage has been regained. But with currencies rising and falling against each other, it is difficult to see who will have the competitive edge and when. It is also difficult to estimate international demand as newly impoverished countries cut their imports. And SA, with its commodity exports, will suffer from the slowing of demand in the world economy.

MAIL & GUARDIAN

The rand has taken an ill-needed battering at the hands of speculators. Far from being a weak currency, all indications are that South Africa's domestic fundamentals remain sound with government debt low, inflation falling and a modest trade balance. It sticks in the gullet to see international hot money profiting from the misfortunes of a country so in need of help. Nobody has to speculate. Those choosing to profit from South Africa's transitional problems must live with their consciences, if indeed they have any.

CAPE BUSINESS
NEWS

Should instability in the financial markets continue, business confidence could in all probability decline further. This in turn could lead to a reduction in inventories and the delay or scrapping of fixed investment projects, which will have a serious adverse impact on economic growth. On the positive side, the expected rise in exports following the depreciation of the rand could prevent the economy entering into a full-blown recession.

A grotesque and ugly spectacle

LAWRENCE INQUIRY

On the latest developments at
the Stephen Lawrence inquiry

THE VOICE

Despite the fact that the inquest found Stephen was killed by five white racist youths, the police have never accepted that it was a racist attack - even though Duwayne Brookes, Stephen's friend who survived that fateful night, heard the five men running towards Stephen shouting "What, what, nigger?"

EVENING STANDARD

The Stephen Lawrence inquiry is turning into a grotesque and demeaning spectacle. It is grotesque because a group of abhorrent racists, who may well belong in jail, have used the occasion to give two fingers to society; and it is British justice that is demeaned. The danger is that the



antics of the Nation of Islam and the clashes with the police will distract attention from the central issues at stake, and their wider implications. The stark fact is that an appalling murder motivated solely by race has taken place in the heart of our city and has gone unpunished, and that it has taken years for the police to come up with a confession of their own incompetence.

THE EXPRESS

The Lawrence family and most of their supporters are mainstream black British people who want to belong fully to a fair society, whose police respect them and where racist killers are vigorously pursued and properly punished. But, if you grow up frightened of the majority around you and are denied justice, you will eventually become embittered and hard line. If, God forbid, we ever return to the race-fuelled riots of the Eighties, the hurt and anger generated by the Lawrence killing will have played its part.

THE HERALD TRIBUNE

The inquiry has succeeded in shedding light on what critics of the Metropolitan Police see as an astonishing degree of incompetence and bias in the force. The hearings supported the longstanding complaints of black leaders here that the authorities are more likely to treat blacks as criminals than victims.

THE DAILY MAIL

Inside the inquiry, despite being subjected to cross-examination by one of the most effective criminal QCs in the land, the five suspects remained sullenly uncommunicative. But outside - provoked by the violent reaction of the crowd, which they had done much to trigger - they paraded their characters for all to see. However deplorable the behaviour of the mob, many will think the spectacle of the five strutting their insolent stuff was infinitely more damning than their testimony.

THE SUN

An ugly demo achieved nothing. The rent-a-mob who stormed the inquiry made themselves look as racist and bigoted as those they were protesting about. But worse, they added to the anguish of Stephen's parents. For five years they have waited for a chance to get at the truth. The militants got in the way. They should pack up their banners and go home.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"He doesn't deserve to be the most hated man in Britain."
Victoria Adams, Spice Girl, on fiancé David Beckham

"We keep talking about the 'sanctity' of human life, but there is nothing very sacred about men and women."
Professor Edward Norman, Canon Treasurer of York Minster

"Football is my life but I have to move on from being a player now. Becoming a coach is the next step and I could not think of a better place to do it than England."
Diego Maradona, Argentinian footballer

"Call me old-fashioned but I would like to know more about how the Government will deal with the coming recession in manufacturing industry... less about their views on football and the freedom of Deirdre from Coronation Street."
John Major

FILM OF THE WEEK

THE REVIVAL OF 'GREASE',
20 YEARS ONHOLLYWOOD
REPORTER
US

Dominating the film is John Travolta, in effect repeating his Fever performance but demonstrating again that he is a particularly charismatic screen personality. Under the choreographer's supervision, his dancing is better this time. So is his singing. Travolta is a presence, as were Brando, Dean and Presley in their day. And in Grease, its makers use it to the maximum.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE
US

Certain movies take on a life of their own and Grease certainly seems to be



one of them. This bouncy, campy celebration of the Fifties' high-school years that nobody ever really had strikes a massive chord in audiences that I'll admit I don't quite hear. What I don't like about Grease is its chirpy artificiality, the just kidding around campiness of secondary characters.

NEW YORK TIMES
US

Watching Grease without a fast-forward button isn't always easy. So why go out of the house for this? Because it could be a Rocky Horror style hoot to watch Grease with an enthusiastic audience, and anyone else who revisits it will feel exactly as you do. The communal pop-along experience here, best suited to the pre-teenage girls last seen swooning over Leonardo, is definitely one you can dance to.

THE BOSTON GLOBE
US

It's still a hoot to watch Travolta - much slimmer and more snake-hipped then - gyrate through a fantasy number à la Elvis, especially when you realise that Elvis was one of the names bandied about when the film was cast. Grease seems kickier now than it did 20 years ago.

MISCELLANEOUS

Stories from around
the worldTHE NATIONAL
Papua New Guinea

Ume Wainetti, an activist with the National Council of Women, said that when women were elevated to positions which their male counterparts thought should be theirs, jealousy and rumours of sexual relationships between them (women) and the bosses tended to crop up at the workplace, especially among the women themselves, and this was the main hindrance to women rising in the hierarchy of their respective organisations.

PRAGUE POST
Czech Republic

While Czech trade officials may be foaming at the mouth, the country's major beer sellers have given a collective shrug to Slovak threats to reduce quotas for Czech beer imports. Still, the dispute threatens to tap out the nearly six-year-old Czech-Slovak customs union. The squabble is rooted in the Slovak government's plan to reduce quotas of Czech beer imports to Slovakia from 532,000 hectoliters (13.8 million gallons) to 300,000 hectoliters per year.

ZAMBIA
DAILY MAIL

In our society, we are daily witnessing countless instances of child abuse. Very often, we see young children carrying heavy loads. These children are sent to do this kind of work either by their parents or guardians. They can be made to carry out errands for which somebody else is being paid and become the unconscious victims of child labour. Mean-while, life goes on as usual and a blind eye is turned to the problem.

Playing ping pong with the Nation of Islam

SEEING PHOTOGRAPHS of the Nation of Islam turning up in their sharp Paul Smith suits and dinky red bow-ties for the Stephen Lawrence enquiry last week brought to mind my own recent encounter with the movement.

Encounter might be coming it a bit strong. It was more a matter of moral debate. Which I like to think I won. Though maybe "I" is coming it a bit strong too, since it wasn't so much "I" who'd won it as the person with whom I was spending the afternoon playing ping pong. The swimmer Sprawson. Thought by many to be the most devilishly handsome man in London, and thought by me - I don't comment on other men's looks - to have written the best book on swimming I have ever read. A judgment not in the least compromised by the in-

cidental fact that his is the only book on swimming I have ever read.

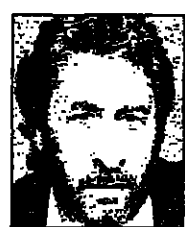
Sprawson's being a swimmer is important to this story. As maybe is his being the most devilishly handsome man in London. You never know what will ignite competition between men. For my part, though, I have to say that challenging Sprawson to ping pong was the last thing on my mind. Challenging him as to looks, perhaps; but challenging him as to ping pong, never. I had nothing to prove. I was the player. Whereas when it came to ping pong Sprawson was the gentleman.

Sprawson wasn't the first to have been goaded by stories of my ping pong acumen. Over the years innumerable friends outside the ping pong fraternity itself have

tried to get me to put my money where my reputation is. How many times have I been taken to lunch at some restaurant that just happens to be next door to the YMCA? How many dinner parties have I attended in good faith only to see the net going up across the dining table before I'm even halfway through dessert?

What it is that makes otherwise circumspect men want to humiliate themselves in this fashion and in the process reward me with so much satisfaction I cannot be sure. It might be something to do with the common misconception that ping pong is a game we can all play, a game not a sport. It might be that I don't look as though I play table tennis and therefore will be easy meat.

Anyway, quite out of nowhere



HOWARD JACOBSON

the swimmer Sprawson was on my case. Any place, any time. "Don't do this to yourself, Charles," I warned him. But once the madness of ping pong rivalry enters a man's heart there's no removing it. Save by a thrashing.

After two or three years talking about it, we decided to settle the issue, once and for all, in the Brixton Leisure Centre. Sprawson set it up. Called for me. Drove me. It was his afternoon. So I have to assume he was too preoccupied to notice the gentlemen in Paul Smith suits and dinky red bow-ties who were standing at the entrances to the Brixton Leisure Centre like bouncers at a Mormon convention. No overt hostility, I have to say. They were impeccably polite. Just surprised to see us.

It was all apologies at the enquiry desk. Awfully sorry. There'd been a double booking. Us and the Nation of Islam.

"That's all right," Sprawson said. "They can come and watch us if they like."

Not so simple. The ping pong ta-

bles happened to be in the very room where the Nation of Islam was holding its conference. Awfully sorry.

"So? We won't interfere."

Impossible. Any other time. He is a fearful figure when he is angry, Sprawson. He has powerful swimmer's shoulders, and gives off the sort of heat you imagine coming out of a shark's jaws when it's finished with a tuna.

"I booked two weeks ago," he said. "You accepted my booking. You took my money. We've come an extremely long way. We want to play."

They couldn't have been more contrite. They'd give us our money back. They'd let us play for nothing next time.

"Not good enough."

"Leave it, Charles," I whispered.

Leave it? Charles? "What I cannot see," he said at last. "Is why the Nation of Islam should stop us playing ping pong."

And that did it. Ethically, historically, philosophically, no one could see why the Nation of Islam should stop us playing ping pong.

Which is how it came about that four members of the black separatist movement held up proceedings for as long as it took them to bring out a table, a net, two balls and a bat, to set us up on a lower floor, in a public space just outside the wrestling room, and to express the hope that we enjoyed our game.

I won easily, as you would expect. But I tasted bitterness in my victory. I'd only beaten Sprawson. Whereas he'd defeated the entire Nation of Islam.

Possibly a saviour, but surely no saint

SATURDAY PROFILE MOSHOO ABILA

PERHAPS THE first point to be made about Moshood Kashimawo Abiola, whose imminent release heralds, in Nigerian terms, a giant retrospective stride in the direction of democracy, is that he is not the Nelson Mandela of this chaotic and corrupt country.

But the complexities of Nigeria, the dangerous drama of its cultural contradictions, the life and death power struggles, the extremes of wealth and poverty, all combine to make what happens there as important for the future of black Africa as what happens in South Africa.

The personal history of Chief Abiola - the journey that took him from a humble home in the state of Ogun, near Lagos, to fabulous wealth, to election as president of his country, and then, instead of assuming office, to four years' imprisonment - touches on most of the forces that together make Nigeria what it is. The decision now before him - to regain freedom if he renounces his victory in the 1993 general election - will in part determine whether this country of hugely gifted people and enviable natural resources, but minimal social and economic achievement, begins to achieve its potential for cohesion and prosperity.

For the young Moshood, as for most of his countrymen, the road to wealth was through education. As a successful tycoon, he would reminisce with his daughter Hafsat, now 23, about a boyhood of collecting firewood and walking miles to school, where he would copy down everything because his family did not have money for books. His family was Muslim but this did not prevent them from sending him to a Baptist school in Abeokuta. Such decisions are not uncommon in West Africa, where the collision of religions is not always as inflammatory as outsiders might expect.

In 1960, his resolve bore fruit and he won a scholarship to study accountancy at Glasgow University. In 1963, after the suppression of his

election victory, he paid tribute to the elected government of Western Nigeria, of whose enlightened educational policy he was a beneficiary. "Without democracy, where would I be today?" he asked. "I want all the people of Nigeria to be able to ask that question of themselves some day."

One also might surmise that the choice of accountancy was indicative of a man with very practical ambitions rather than a calling as such. The road to salvation led through the mastery of money. Later, when Hafsat asked his advice on what to study at Harvard, the question of her own particular talents did not enter into the equation. He sent her a postcard with the recommendation: "Finance and computer science". In the event, not entirely at home with economics, Hafsat created her own major, adding in politics and history.

But for Abiola, the choice of accountancy paid off. He began his career as a hospital accountant in Lagos, then moved to join the US multinational TTT, where he became Africa director. This proved a launchpad for his ascent into the world of stratospheric riches.

There is no quicker route to wealth in corrupt Third World economies than through the allocation of lucrative contracts. He built on his relationships with men in the top echelons of the military whose support is a prerequisite for the advancement of any significant project in Nigeria. It is said he even took responsibility for the care of some of the children of Sani Abacha, the military dictator who eventually jailed him.

The ambivalence of relationships among the powerful gives some credence to the account of military officials last month that Abiola broke into tears on hearing about Abacha's

death. Dupe Abiola, one of his surviving wives, said this account rings true. "Most of Abacha's children are like Abiola's children," she said at the time. "Because of the depth of their relationship, that was the sentiment he must have felt."

And, indeed, the relationship was deep. The corrupt rulers who were to jail him first eased his path to riches. Without these friends, he could never have acquired an airline, a publishing house, farms, factories and interests in more than 2,000 companies ranging from banking to oil exploration. Nor could he have acquired his massive 50-room estate in the Lagos suburb of Ikeja, with its swimming pools, razor wire-topped walls and stretch Mercedes in the garage. However, Dupe Abiola denies that her husband was a creature of the military. "They did not make him. He made them," she insists. "They were coming to him for money. That's how they became so close."

To Ibrahim Babangida, military dictator at the time of the 1993 elections, Abiola must have seemed to represent a way out of a political impasse. Under fierce national and international pressure to restore something resembling a democratic system of government, he engineered the creation of both a centre-left and a centre-right party. Abiola, leading the Social Democrats, achieved a more than respectable 38.4 per cent of the popular vote, taking 20 of the country's 30 states and the federal capital, Abuja. There was also a constitutional requirement that the winner should gain one-third of the votes in two-thirds of the states, which Abiola satisfied as well.

However, it was probably this unexpected ability to cut across religious and tribal lines that led to his imprisonment.

It is the military that benefits from the minefield of Nigerian politics, and the military that became alarmed when some of its mines appeared to be defused. Abiola revealed a worrying ability to cross the lines dividing the mainly Christian Yorubas in the south-west from the Christian Ibos in the east and the Hausa Fulani in the Muslim north. Ultimately, it was the northern Hausa generals, who run the army, who balked at the idea of a southern Yoruba president.

However, Abiola didn't need to go to jail. He appears to have miscalculated. When he declared himself president in 1994, he knew that this would lead to his imprisonment but probably hoped that the ensuing popular unrest would bring about his release and the assumption of power. Abacha was able to ensure that this did not happen.

Nevertheless, it is hard to argue that a man who spends four years in jail when he could, if he had compromised, be enjoying all that money can buy, is entirely without principle. Moreover, Abiola, now 61, has maintained his resolve in the face of physical suffering. He has been maltreated in jail while suffering from diabetes and its complications - eye problems, swollen feet - as well as from a weak heart.

He has also had to endure the loss of one of his many wives, Hafsat's mother, Kudirat, who was assassinated after campaigning for his release.

"My role is to give leadership, and that will come in due course," he said in 1993. His confidence now tempered by bitter experience, he may still be holding on to a view of himself as saviour of the country.

Whether a President Abiola would be a saviour or not is almost impossible to predict. During the 1993 campaign, his Lagos house was reported to sport two gilded thrones marked President and - in honour of his running mate, Babangida Kingibe - Vice-president. It is unlikely that the display was intended



Moshood Kashimawo Abiola, winner of Nigeria's 1993 elections

J Melendez/Camera Press

as an ironic comment on the tendency towards the grandiose of so many African leaders.

What he did reveal, during his political ascendancy, was an appreciation of the fact that a ruler is under an obligation to deliver material benefit to those who elect him.

On the campaign trail, he chose to travel by road rather than helicopter - a brave decision in potholed Nigeria - and announced: "There is no point flying over prob-

lems when we come to solve them." Unfortunately, most African leaders have taken the first option of flying without conscience over their countries' problems.

True, Abiola has shown a capacity for self-sacrifice - but then many men who became dictators first did their time in prison. But his story does reveal one nice paradox. Like many of his countrymen, he gave his all to the acquisition of wealth. But, when the chips were

down, he decided there was a higher goal to aim for. Whether this was political power pure and simple, or a genuine desire to change his country for the better, we cannot yet know. If the latter, his parents will prove to have been prescient. His second name, Kashimawo, given with typical African fatalism, means in Yoruba: "Let us hope this one survives".

JAMES ROBERTS

A memorial to the human endurance of grief

SATURDAY ESSAY by LAWRENCE JAMES

WE SHALL remember them. The First World War will not go away. It has become implanted in our national consciousness and still has the capacity to generate powerful emotions, chiefly anger, pride, pity and regret. The last was uppermost in the minds of those who watched the pageantry of official remembrance at Tilpval last Wednesday. It marked the 82nd anniversary of the first day of the Somme.

There were no frail veterans present this year but plenty of sightseers, some of whom had come to scan the war memorials for the names of distant kinsmen. Personal links, however tenuous, and mementoes bind the present to the past. Photographs, medals, letters from the front and soldiers' diaries are still treasured by families for whom they represent not only private memories but a pride in having participated in history on a grand scale. Schoolchildren were among the onlookers; tours of battlefields give immediacy to a war which, with its poetry, has become embedded in history and English syllabuses.

Death and the emotions it arouses are never far from the surface of our national memory of the First World War. Just over 700,000 British, Common-

wealth and Imperial servicemen and women died or were reported "missing in action", three-quarters of them aged between 19 and 34. This was the "lost generation" whose disappearance has prompted one of the most tantalising "what ifs" of our history. Had they lived, would their energy, idealism and talents have regenerated the country? Could they have avoided the errors of the old men who ran it between the wars?

Behind this question lurks another: "Were their lives wasted?" Not according to the war memorials which can be seen in nearly every city, town and village. Their language and symbolism announced that the mass sacrifice had been worthwhile; the "glorious" dead had fallen in a noble cause.

The iconography of the memorials reinforced this message: the victims of modern, impersonal war were often represented by armoured knights from a time when the battleground had been the field of glory. Images from past holy wars reassured those who mourned: their lost sons, husbands and lovers had not died in vain. One mother wrote: "I have often thought how honoured a woman must feel to be the mother of a great man - and now I know this veil has fallen on me."

Those engaged in the 20th century conflict in France were driven by pride, patriotism, a sense of adventure and a conviction that they were on the side of the right. The government promised that those who joined together would fight together and so friends and workmates in peace became comrades in war.

This pledge created the "Pals" battalions; in Glasgow, young tramway workers enlisted en masse to form the 15th Highland Light Infantry. The scheme proved a recipe for disaster. When a local "Pals" battalion was decimated, as many were, whole communities were thrown into mourning, as was Accrington after the Somme.

This is why names like the Somme and Passchendaele never achieved the same resonance as Agincourt or Waterloo. They were not glorious, but protracted, gruelling contests between mass armies of amateurs in which men were pitted against machines, explosives and chemicals. Only by burrowing underground could soldiers survive. They showed extraordinary courage and loyalty to their officers and each other. As he went off to look



A veteran with a bouquet of poppies, potent memorial symbol of the First World War

Brian Harris

after a wounded friend in no-man's-land, a soldier remarked: "He'll be terribly lonely out there by himself." Neither survived the night.

The grim nature of trench warfare and the fatalism it engendered are familiar from the verse of Sassoon and Owen and the prose of Blunden and Graves. Mud, sudden death and hideous mutilation were everywhere in what the war artist, Paul Nash, called a land where "no glimmer of God's hand is seen".

The hellish landscape of the Western Front will always dom-

inate our perception of the war. The scale of the horror and the deaths inevitably prompt the questions: "Why?" and "To what end?" The simplest and therefore most plausible answer was to interpret the war as a cynical betrayal of the nation by its leaders.

Idealistic young men were enticed to fight for a cause that was not that proclaimed on the recruitment posters. Their country needed them not to rescue Europe from Prussian "militarism", or defend the independence of Belgium (which had been ravaged before the

war for atrocities in the Congo) or Serbia (whose provocation of Austria had triggered the war), but to make the world a safe place for the British Empire.

Britain was fighting because a German-dominated Europe would jeopardise the Empire and the naval supremacy that underpinned it. These would also have been endangered if Britain had chosen to be neutral in 1914, for whatever the outcome, it was bound to face future French and Russian hostility. This made sense, but the defence of abstract national interests was not a cause to inflame the nation. A vision of Britain as the champion of the underdog did.

Misled by politicians, the soldiers suffered a second betrayal by their generals, most notably Haig, the commander in France. The final brickbat was the musical *Oh! What a Lovely War* which fixed him and his staff in the popular imagination as blunderers who were careless with the lives of their troops.

Public records and private papers released over the past 30 years give a different but still dispiriting picture of the British High Command. Stubbornness and lack of imagination were

the prevailing vices at Headquarters, not callousness or stupidity, although these were present.

Haig and his staff faced a siege of strong and complex German lines, sometimes up to 20 miles deep, that could only be punctured by the deployment of the new military technology which became available as the war progressed. An effective formula for the use of artillery, tanks, aircraft and infantry was eventually found and tipped the balance in the summer of 1918. In the meantime, Haig waged a war of attrition in which he employed men as battering rams in order to preserve the "fighting spirit" of his army.

Haig justified himself on two grounds. He sincerely believed that God had chosen him to save the British Empire in a time of peril, and that his battles weakened the enemy and preserved morale. He and other generals secretly feared that citizen soldiers lacked the moral stamina necessary to conquer fear.

Junior officers knew otherwise. One wrote: "They scoffed at the idea of the young draper's assistant or bank clerk putting on khaki and taking a rifle and bayonet to fight the trained men of the Continental armies. They argued that the

undersize youths from our poorer quarters would be physically incapable of fighting the hulking peasants of Brandenburg. They were wrong."

Young officers from the patrician caste not only learned to admire the cheerful toughness of the working class, but they also developed a social conscience. The welfare policies of Attlee and Macmillan were rooted in their wartime experiences.

As for the old ruling class, its marital wind was ridiculed as Colonel Blimp, and a profound feeling developed that it had let down the nation. A new element was added to class antipathy, which was tempered by a respect for junior officers who had led from the front and suffered accordingly.

If modern, total war, was the test of a nation's moral resolution, and many believed that it was, then the First World War represented a victory for a people which showed that it could endure extremes of hardship, human loss and grief.

It was this sense of having seen it through that made the strongest impact on our national culture. A natural fascination as to why and how this was accomplished explains how this war continues to hold such a powerful grip on our imagination.

**Jafar
Sharif
Emami**

David Childs
Jafar Sharif Emami, politician:
born Tehran 8 September 1910;
married (one son, two daughters);
died New York 16 June 1998.

Jafar Sharif Emami

Professor K. D. White

WHEN K. D. White achieved his first Chair (Rhodes University, South Africa) at the age of 29, classical scholarship was already moving from homage to scrutiny from romance to realism. Ronald Syme was about to demonstrate that the top 20 families of ancient Rome had nothing to learn from any modern mogul or tycoon in their restless and devious pursuit of wealth and power.

The realism of Syme's *The Roman Revolution*, published in 1939, was highly congenial to White, but for him realism had to be based on *Realien*. How, he asked, did an upwardly mobile Roman, machinating and manoeuvring, move horizontally from point A to point B? If horse-drawn, what breed and saddle? If by carriage, what design and manufacture? Most fundamental of all, how did he and his family, his clients and his slaves, stay alive? How did their daily sustenance arrive at their tables? Who grew it on what soil with what implements?

Some scholars derided these questions as peripheral ("This is not what we remember the Romans for"), others condemned them as pointless unless they were tending towards a Marxian critique of exploitation. To which White replied that the central achievements of antiquity could be more justly appraised in the context of a total way of life.

He didn't have to be a technologist. A Double First at Liverpool, a scholarship to Peterhouse, a Double First at Cambridge, lectureships at Edinburgh and Leeds, these had all equipped him for an orthodox career in language, literature, or history. But his practical

temperament was fascinated by the South Africa where he went in 1933, a country that replicated conditions in Republican Italy, vast agricultural estates alongside subsistence farming, the latest agribusiness technology alongside peasant families cultivating their tiny plots with traditional tools to ancestral rhythms.

Both there, and in Natal and Nigeria, he discarded the concepts of "primitive" and "modern" to concentrate on what actually worked in particular circumstances. So he studied different systems of farming and acquired hands-on experience of a variety of farming operations (the dust-cover of his later book *Roman Farming* shows him wielding a reconstruction of a Roman scythe).

This phase of his life was one of diligent and wholesome spadework, with nothing monumental to show for it, though papers in classical, economic and agricultural journals had begun to build his reputation. The catalyst that he needed came with his Commonwealth Fellowship at St John's College, Cambridge, in 1960-61. It gave him respite both from his normal duties and from the stress of being a liberal under apartheid. What helped even more was that he found colleagues who appreciated the value of his work and who urged on him the duty of reducing chaotic abundance to a form in which it could be shared with the scholarly world.

It took time, but when the Cambridge University Press published *Agricultural Implements of the Roman World* in 1967 we had our first comprehensive, validated, and illustrated survey of all known implements and machines. In 1975 *Farm Equipment of the Roman World* followed, a survey of all Roman farm equipment not covered in *Agricultural Implements*.

From now on White was unstoppable. In the interval between these surveys he published *Roman Farming* (1970), a 536-page handbook covering draining and irrigation, crop and animal husbandry, vines, olives, and orchards, farm buildings, layout, and more. Much in demand, he enjoyed several prestigious visiting appointments. Retirement was not on his agenda, but he did pause from his main task to delight the general reader with *Country Life in Classical Times* (1977). There was one more big book, *Greek and Roman Technology* (1984), which covered agriculture, food processing, building, mining, metallurgy, transport, civil and hydraulic engineering.

His pupils, first at Rhodes, then at Natal and Ibadan universities, at Reading and then back in Nigeria at Jos, loved him for the clarity of his teaching and for the warmth of his character. He was willing to lecture on anything, he took his share of the chores, and was cherished by his colleagues for his acuity and quirkiness, even when his irrepressible enthusiasms left them with the feeling that they were only half alive. He played his part in the government of his universities, and was particularly concerned for the welfare of poor students.

There was much more to "K.D.", family, friends, and church, poetry, music,



Statue of an old shepherd, Palazzo dei Conservatori, Rome; illustration from White's *Roman Farming* (Thames and Hudson, 1970)

and art, good food and wine, the whole farrago of successive environments.

Harold F. Guile

Kenneth Douglas White, classicist: born Liverpool 22 November 1908; Professor and Head of the Department of Classics, Rhodes University 1938-58; Professor and Head of the Department of Classics, Natal University 1958-62; Professor of Ancient History, University of Ibadan 1962-65; Reader in Classics, Reading University 1967-71; Professor of Classics 1971-74 (Emeritus); Professor of Classics, University of Jos 1976-78; married 1936 Isabel McKay (one son, two daughters); died London 10 June 1998.



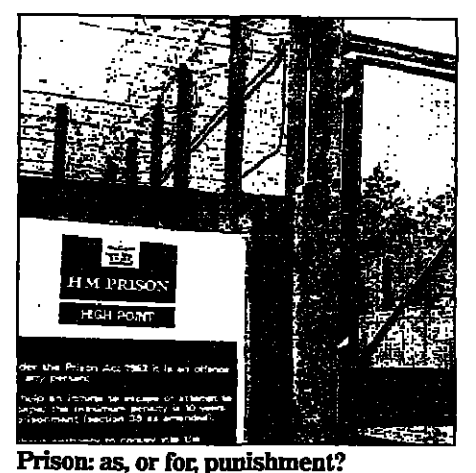
SOCIOLOGICAL NOTES ANDREW COYLE

The place and purpose of punishment

PUNISHMENT IS a complex concept which arouses great emotion. It involves the infliction of pain on one person by another. This pain is usually justified on the grounds that the first person has done something which is wrong and that the second has a legal or moral right to respond by inflicting punishment. The right to inflict pain in this way comes, it is argued, from the authority relationship of one party to the other, whether it be parent to child, teacher to pupil or judge to offender. It is generally accepted that any such punishment should be proportionate to the wrong which has been done.

The emotion surrounding this subject arises when one begins to consider the nature of punishment and the purpose which it is meant to achieve. It is an emotion which has loomed large in British society in recent years, particularly when the discussion is about the punishment which is to be meted out to those who have been found guilty of breaking the criminal law. The most extreme form of punishment which can be imposed in our society is imprisonment. One oft-quoted aphorism is that "People are sent to prison as punishment, not for punishment". In other words, the punishment should consist solely of being deprived of liberty. The only additional punishment should come about as a direct consequence of loss of liberty and not through any added penalties imposed by the prison system, such as restriction of diet or prohibition of contact with family or unsanitary living conditions.

This debate very quickly leads on to a discussion about the purpose of punishment. If it is purely retributive, one can argue that conditions of imprisonment should be as punitive and restrictive as possible. But most commentators wish to add an element of reform or rehabilitation to the concept of punishment. One of its consequences, they argue, should be that the person who is subjected to the punishment will be less likely to commit further offences or crimes in the future. This will come about either because of the deterrent effect of the punishment or because it has led the person being punished to a greater awareness of the need to behave differently in the future. The judge, like the parent of the wayward child, punishes an offender for his or her



Prison: as, or for, punishment?

"own good", in order to help the offender to become a better person.

The difficulty with this worthy ambition is that our adversarial criminal justice system finds it very difficult to cope with such complex objectives. The offender who goes to prison regards imprisonment primarily as retributive and is not convinced by arguments about their potential for rehabilitation. The victim of the original offence is likely to be confused by a series of mixed messages about how he or she is meant to benefit from the outcome of court proceedings. The public is at best ambivalent about the value of the whole process. One of the unfortunate results of this confusion is that all parties are left feeling quite dissatisfied.

As we come toward the end of the 20th century, it may be that the time has come to review the place of punishment in our society. In particular, we need to consider the extent to which we use the criminal justice process as a means of repairing the harm which has been done by one individual to another. Certainly, the criminal justice process is probably best equipped to deal with extreme acts of violence or breach of trust. However, there are already a number of successful examples, both in this country and internationally, of alternative forms of justice which better meet the needs of the victim, of the offender and of society.

Dr Andrew Coyle is co-editor of a new quarterly, *Punishment and Society*

GAZETTE

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS

BIRTHS
HUMPHREYS: Philip and Cindy are pleased to announce the birth of Cameron John, on 24 June 1998.

ROYAL ENGAGEMENTS

The Duke of Edinburgh tomorrow attends Henley Royal Regatta. The Princess Royal tomorrow attends Evensong at Gloucester Cathedral to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the National Health Service.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

TODAY: The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am; No 7 Company Coldstream Guards mounts the Queen's Guard, at Buckingham Palace, 11.30am, band provided by the Coldstream Guards. **TOMORROW:** The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 10am.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS (Births, Adoptions, Marriages, Deaths, Memorial services, Weddings, funerals, etc.) are charged at £2.50 a line (VAT extra). Other Gazette announcements (notices, functions, forthcoming marriages, etc.) which must be submitted in writing are charged at £10 a line, VAT extra. Always include a daytime telephone number.

The Independent's main switchboard number is 0171-293 2000. The OBITUARIES e-mail address is obituaries@independent.co.uk

BIRTHDAYS

TODAY: Prince Michael of Kent, 58; King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV of Tonga, 80; The Duke of Abercorn, Lord-Lieutenant of Co Tyrone, 64; Mr Graham Archer, High Commissioner to Malta, 59; M René Arnoux, Grand Prix driver, 50; Mr Gordon Baker, High Commissioner to Belize, 57; Lord Barber, former Chancellor of the Exchequer, 78; Mr Alec Bedser, cricketer, 80; Mr Eric Bedser, cricketer, 80; Dr Roger Berry MP, 50; Mr Richard Clothier, chief executive, Dalgety, 53; Mr Alastair Goodlad MP, 55; Mr Roy Henderson, baritone, 99; Mr David Jensen, broadcaster, 48; Miss Gina Lollobrigida, actress, 71; The Hon Francis Maude MP, former Government Minister, 45; Sir George Newman, High Court judge, 57; Sir Paul Scoon, former Governor-General of Grenada, 63; Miss Pam Shriver, tennis player, 36; Mr Neil Simon, playwright, 71; Professor Sir Michael Stoker, former President, Clare Hall, Cambridge, 80; Mr Colin Welland, actor and playwright, 64.

TOMORROW: Sir Anthony Battisill, former chairman of the Board of Inland Revenue, 61; Dame Joyanne Bracewell QC, High Court judge, 64; Mr Mark Cox, tennis player, 55; Sir Douglas Dodds-Parker, former MP, 89; Mrs Elizabeth Emanuel, dressmaker, 45; Mr Peter Fraenkel, civil engineer, 83; Sir Anthony Goodenough, High Commissioner to Canada, 57; Sir Michael Hamilton, former MP, 80; Mr Brian Hanson MP, 41; Mr Brian Iddon MP, 58; Mr Ralph Kesteven, managing director, Gerald Metals, 69; Mr Philip Madoe, actor, 64; M Pierre Mauroy, former French prime minister, now Mayor of Lille, 70; Maj-Gen Sir Jeremy Moore, defence consultant and former commander, Land Forces, Falk-

land Islands, 70; Sir Ian Prosser, chairman and chief executive, Bass plc, 55; Mr George Rothery, composer, 80; The Right Rev James Ruxburgh, Assistant Bishop, Liverpool, 77; Sir John Ure, former diplomat, 67; Mr John Wright, cricketer, 44.

ANNIVERSARIES

TODAY: Births: Jean-Pierre Blanchard, balloonist, 1753; Nathaniel Hawthorne, writer, 1804; Giuseppe Garibaldi, Italian leader, 1807; Dr Thomas John Barnardo, philanthropist, 1845; Walter Greaves, painter, 1846; John Calvin Coolidge, 30th US President, 1872; Louis Burt Mayer, Hollywood "movie mogul", 1885; Gertrude Lawrence (Gertrude Alexandra Klaven), actress, 1888; Daniel Louis Armstrong, jazz trumpeter and singer, 1900; Lionel Trilling, writer and educator, 1905. Deaths: Benvenuto di Pepo (Giovanni Cimabue), painter, 1302; William Byrd, organist and composer, 1623; Samuel Richardson, novelist, 1761; John Adams, second US President, 1826; Thomas Jefferson, third US President, 1826; James Monroe, fifth US president, 1831; Viscount François-René de Chateaubriand, politician and writer, 1848; Marie Curie (Maria Sklodowska), chemist, 1934; Suzanne Lenglen, tennis player, 1938; Louis Wain, illustrator of cats, 1939; Wladyslaw Sikorski, prime minister of Poland, in an air crash 1943; Bernard Cyril, first Baron Freyberg, Governor-General of New Zealand, 1963. On this day: the Barebones Parliament began sitting, 1553; the American Declaration of Independence was adopted, 1776; Karl Heinrich Marx and Friedrich Engels published the Communist Manifesto, 1848; the Statue of Liberty was presented by the people of France to the US.

1883; the Republic of the Philippines was established, 1946. Today is Independence Day in the United States of America and the Feast Day of St Andrew of Crete, St Bertha of Blangy, St Elizabeth of Portugal, St Odo of Canterbury, St Ulric of Augsburg and The Martyrs of Dorchester.

TOMORROW: Births: Luke Hansard, printer of *Hansard*, 1752; Mrs Sarah Siddons (Kemble), actress, 1755; George Henry Borrow, writer and linguist, 1803; Phineas Taylor Barnum, showman, 1810; Thomas Barry Sullivan, actor, 1821; Mandell Creighton, Bishop of London and writer, 1843; Agnes Zimmermann, pianist and composer, 1845; William Thomas Stead, journalist and social reformer, 1849; Cecil John Rhodes, colonist and politician, 1853; Wanda Louise Landowska, harpsichord player, 1877; Dwight Dillie Davis, statesman and founder of the Davis Tennis Cup, 1878; Jean Cocteau, poet, novelist and artist, 1889; Georges Pompidou, president of France, 1911. Deaths: Ernst Theodor Wilhelm Amadeus Hoffmann, writer, artist and composer, 1822; Sir Thomas Stamford Raffles, founder of Singapore, 1826; Joseph-Nicéphore Niepce, pioneer in photography, 1823; Sir Austen Henry Layard, archaeologist, 1894; Jules-Adolphe Almé-Louis Breton, painter, 1906; Georges Bernanos, novelist and writer, 1948; Walter Adolph Gropius, architect, 1969; Gertrude Heyer, novelist, 1974. On this day: in London, the Star Chamber was abolished, 1641; George Hammond was appointed the first British ambassador to the US, 1791; the British were defeated by the American forces at the Battle of Chippewa, 1814; the gold sovereign coin was first issued, 1817; the *Spectator* was first published, 1828; the travel agents Thomas Cook and

Son were founded, 1841; the Salvation Army was founded, 1865; Oliveira Salazar became virtual dictator of Portugal at the head of a Fascist regime, 1932; after the General Election, the Labour Party received its first absolute majority, 1945; the National Health Service came into operation, 1948. Tomorrow is Tynwald Day, Isle of Man and the Feast Day of St Antony-Mary Zaccaria and St Athanasius the Athlete.

LECTURES

TODAY National Gallery: "Masters of Light: Dutch painting from Utrecht in the Golden Age", for the death, 11.30am; Norman Coady: "Snakes (I), Nicolo dell'Abate: *The Death of Eurymachus*", 12pm. Victoria and Albert Museum: Martin Barnes, "Aspects of Exteriors: re-presenting architecture", 2pm. Tate Gallery: Laurence Bradbury, "The Strength of Quietude in Art", 1pm.

TOMORROW National Portrait Gallery: Paul Webb, "Ronald Colman", 3pm.

ROYAL COLLEGE OF ART

The Earl of Snowdon, Provost of the Royal College of Art, presided over Convocation yesterday at the Royal Albert Hall, London SW7. Professor Christopher Frayling, Rector, gave the address. The following awards were made:

Honorary Doctorates: Peter Blake, Dr William Brown, Ken Loach. Senior Fellowships: Graham Hughes, Rosamund Jolly. Honorary Fellowships: Julian Harrison, John Murphy, Judith Nesbit, Michael Perry, Francis Spalding, Anne Tyrrell, Guy Wigginton. Fellowships: Professor Ron Arad, Professor Juan Antonio Correa, Alan Cumming, Ian Hargrave, Alan Kitchen, Corinne Smith.

The Prophet Mohamed an Arabian imperialist?

DURING THE past week Muslims in cities as varied as Jakarta and Bradford have been celebrating the birthday of the Prophet Mohamed. Though he was an Arab, he is seen by Muslims as simply the "Messenger of God" to all nations. But how do non-Muslims regard him?

In 1982, during the 500th anniversary of the fall of Muslim Spain, a Catholic friend said to me: "The Arabs had no right to be in Spain anyway. Like their Prophet, they were imperialists." I was brought up as a Pakistani Muslim and had never thought of Islam as an Arab religion or of the Prophet Mohamed as an Arabian imperialist, even though I had always resented the openly racist attitudes displayed by virtually all Arabs towards non-Arab Muslims.

But it is an accusation Muslims need to address if they hope to settle the imperialist question: if Muslims deplore the Western experiment with power as completely treasonable to the cause of Jesus of Nazareth, how can they justify their own conquest of the world in the name of Allah?

No one sees the Buddha or Jesus as imperialists. Mohamed, however, did lead armies if only in self-defence. His alleged political delinquencies have always shocked Jews and Christians. Virtually all Muslims, however, even in this ideologically self-conscious age, still proudly call him "the warrior-prophet". Only Westernised liberal Muslims seem embarrassed by the Prophet's military record.

The Koran does authorise conquest of the whole world though not enforced conversion. Man is appointed as God's deputy (*khalifah*) on earth but he is to assume rulership on condition that he himself accepts rulership under God. The right to be an imperialist in the created order is conditional on the duty to be a servant of God and other human beings. The wars in the time of the Prophet were all defensive: most of the conflicts during the reigns of the four caliphs were however for universal conquest. This extension of the

witness to the greatness of God beyond the strict confines of the Arabian peninsula is seen these days as in need of apology.

According to official Islamic apology, the ruler receives the right to be a ruler on condition that he remains accountable as a servant. The Koran is always there to remind him both of his double status and of the fact that authority is graciously bestowed, not acquired by force or inheritance. In principle, Islamic rule, when free of worldly ambition, is meant to stand robust witness for a style of sovereignty in which the pride of rulership is founded on the hu-

FAITH & REASON

SHABIR AKHTAR

Modern fears of Islamic expansionism are ill-founded. History offers more cause to fear domination by Christian than by Muslim powers

mility of service. Where one dominates, one brings submission (which is the literal meaning of Islam) too. As with politics, so with nature: the Muslim scientist visits the mosque on the way home from the laboratory. Understand Nature so as to serve God. Rule the world so that you might serve the King of Kings - a title blasphemously appropriated by the late Shah of Iran.

Where there is political humility, there is no room for the usual sources of hubris: the ethnic pride in land and tribe, the imperial pride of sheer strength without accountability, and the Semitic pride of exclusive covenant. The Muslim community was to be a multi-lingual society based on the revolutionary principle of freely cho-

sen belief in one God. The arbitrary circumstance of ethnicity, necessarily an accident of birth, was rejected in favour of a radical view of human nature as monogenetic - all men and women seen as descended from Adam and Eve. Belief conferred citizenship. The group that coalesced around Mohamed was meant to be one set apart from others by its vision of a noble and tolerant humanism in the name of God. It didn't work; but the vision has continued to inspire many in every age since. None the less, Arabs are not the only colonialists around and not necessarily the worst ones. Arab conquest was an expressly religious movement coming on the heels of Mohamed's death and in professed obedience to scripture. The rulers settled among the vanquished nations: Islam was not a mercantile imperialism dedicated to amassing wealth from the conquered territories to transfer back to Mecca. Jews and Christians were treated honourably during Islam's lenient ascendancy. By contrast, the universal expansion of European influence began at a stage when the restraining moral influence of Christianity was minimal. Europeans rarely settled in the lands they invaded; when they did, there were genocides. As Europeans left their former colonies, they often created synthetic nation-states ruled by a corrupt elite; the peoples were left impoverished and humiliated.

In 1956, Tunisian Muslims rejected the stock French justification for governing North Africa. The French had insisted that Africans were too immature to govern themselves; the Tunisians turned the question round and riposted: "Are the French ready for self-government?" Muslims question, with some justification, the idea that those who founded their own democracies on exploitation and blood shed can teach others the art of political humility. No doubt all imperialists are guilty; but, when assessing the Prophet Mohamed, let us stay with the poet Burns who advises us to "gently scan your brother man".

ON THIS DAY 1948

Page 2 THE DAILY MIRROR

FORWARD WITH THE PEOPLE

Cervantine House, Fetter Lane, E.C.4. And at 42-48, Hardman-st., Manchester 2. Blackfriars 2313.

THIS DAY

THE DAY IS HERE! For years reformers of all Parties have

HERE'S HOW the Daily Mirror marked the opening of the NHS in its leader:

The day is here! For years reformers of all parties have tried to safeguard the aged, the poor and the sick. Much has been done - much more than in any other large country. But always you wanted fuller protection against misfortune. You wanted the State to accept larger responsibility for the individual citizen who served it faithfully. You wanted Social Security. From this day hence, you have it.

Of course, there are critics of Social Security. They are the same people who, when the first five shillings was paid to the first old-age pensioner, declared that the country could not afford it and that social services would lead to bankruptcy. You know better than that. You know that Social Security means a fairer and better distribution of the National Income and that no country can be too poor to guarantee its people a fair share of the essentials of life.

Yet the critics are right in one sense. The quality of Social Security and the amount of

money that can be spent on it depend on the size of the National Income. The bigger the National Income, the better the Social Security.

The harder we work, for example, the sooner will we have those Health Centres so necessary to make the new Health Service a success.

Especially in the Health Service there will be many shortages and shortcomings at first. Only more production in every mine and factory can fill the gaps. Social Security cannot be got for the asking. It must be earned.

One other thought. We are leading the whole world in Social Security at a time of grave economic difficulty. We have taken the brave decision for three reasons. First, because we believe in social justice. Secondly, because our State belongs to the people - unlike so many countries where the people belong to the State - and Social Security converts our democratic ideal into human reality. Thirdly, because we believe in the future.

Here is your incentive - to work for your country and a larger, more social Security!

LIFE BEFORE THE NHS



"I couldn't afford a doctor to give me stitches. So then of course I was kept in bed for three weeks because I wasn't healing properly." Before the NHS, Marjory Freeman, 80, could not afford stitches after the birth of her child.

"We thought that poverty would be abolished - and some of us knew plenty about that. Nobody minded that it was going to cost a bit in National Insurance. We didn't begrudge it. It was a magnificent step forward."

George Carter, 81, remembers when plans began for the NHS.

"People would slip us 10 shillings. They were so delighted with getting into the hospital and being treated. They were grateful and expressed their gratitude

to the person who was caring." Irene Swan started her nurse's training in the early days of the NHS.

"I know you have to be on the waiting list but the problem you're suffering isn't getting any better. It's getting worse all the time." Gladys Routledge has been waiting for a year for an operation to get a new left knee.

"They should have honoured the promises they made to us, that medical care would be free for everyone, rich or poor: man, woman, or child." Nancy Loud, 82, who took care of her ill husband for over a decade, and then had to pay care home fees for nearly ten years.

AGE CONCERN

THEN AND NOW

Life expectancy:

1948
Males - 66.4 years
Females - 71.2 years
1994
Males - 74.2 years
Females - 79.4 years

Infant mortality (deaths at ages under one year per 1,000 births):
1948 - 26.766
1994 - 3.979

Deaths in childhood:

1-4 years
1948 - 5.019
1994 - 796
5-9 years
1948 - 2.174
1994 - 465

Gross cost of hospital and family health services:
1949 - £224 million

1997 - £24 billion

Total NHS cost:
1949 - £437 million
1997 - £43,305 billion

Total NHS cost per person:
1949 - £9
1997 - £734
Number of staff employed:
1951 - 410,154
1995 - 932,658

Number of NHS hospital beds available to patients:
1951 - 542,000 beds
1994-5 - 281,000 beds

Average length of stay in hospital:
1951 - 45 days
1994 - 5-7 days

Number of GPs:
1951 - 20,179
1995 - 32,939

50 Years of the NHS

A 50-year love story

It's been a bumpy ride but the British nation is deeply fond of its health service. It needs continual funding to stay that way. By Barbara Castle

ONE OF the most telling examples of the enduring hold on the British public of the NHS came from William Hague last week when a blockage in his sinus necessitated a short stay in hospital. He had the operation on the NHS in Darlington Memorial Hospital and occupied a side room in a public ward.

Twelve years ago Margaret Thatcher had an operation on her hand and flaunted the fact that she had it privately in the King Edward VII Hospital.

True, William Hague is not Prime Minister. Nonetheless his decision to go into a public ward of the NHS shows that it is now politically more voter-friendly to share the national system of health care than to contract out as Margaret Thatcher did into private medicine.

William Hague's gesture was a fitting celebration of the NHS' 50th anniversary.

Those 50 years have been a bumpy ride. As war leader Churchill never visualised that the taken obeisance to a national health service would result in Bevan's full-blooded comprehensive scheme for universal health care financed out of taxation and free at the point of delivery, including the nationalisation of our hospitals.

Nor were some of the members of Attlee's 1944-5 Cabinet any happier, notably Herbert Morrison, pre-war boss of the London County Council and ferocious defender of his beloved municipal hospitals.

Other faint hearts in the Cabinet trembled as Dr Charles Hill, secretary of the BMA, who had won a national reputation as the radio doctor during the war, threatened to lead a strike of GPs against the proposed "socialised medicine". With his plummy voice and beguiling bedside manner he launched his campaign by warning GPs that they would become the salaried slaves of an all-powerful state.

Even ardently reformist young Labour MPs in the post-war Parliament (of which I was one) held their breath anxiously when Bevan announced that the service would start on 6 July 1948 whether or not Dr Hill's hostile rhetoric boycotted it.

But Bevan sensed he had the public behind him. They had had enough of the pre-war patchwork provision of health care, under which a limited number of breadwinners were insured for free treatment and medicine from their panel doctor, while their wives, children and elderly relatives had to pay. Inevitably most of them went without.

Public-spirited GPs hated the system. My own excellent GP warned me that she always treated her panel patients better than her private patients, of which I was perforce one. Nonetheless her percep-

ient analysis of my pain due to acute appendicitis probably saved my life.

But this realisation by some GPs that the old system robbed them of the clinical freedom to prescribe what their poorer patients needed was not shared by the reactionary sections of the medical establishment, and Bevan took a gamble in throwing down the gauntlet to them in fixing his appointed day. To our intense relief, he won. Faced by the clamour of their own patients to give them the benefits of the new service the GPs caved in.

Within a matter of weeks the majority of them had joined up, and within a matter of months 93 per cent of the population had enrolled in the NHS. It was a remarkable demonstration of patient power.

But the opponents of the NHS did not give up easily. Before long the inevitable claims that people were abusing the service and forcing its costs to astronomical heights came rolling in. Lady Isobel Barnett for instance, a Conservative propagandist, claimed that patients were queuing up for free cotton wool to stuff their cushions with.

But on the whole most people were filled with an immense sense of gratitude. Pensioners in my own constituency who had been used to buying a 6d pair of magnifying spectacles in Woolworths to improve their foggy sight now found to their excitement that they were entitled

PRESENT

THE STATE WE'RE IN

to an eye test for the first time in their lives.

Churchill was quick to seize on the rising health care expenditure as an example of "Socialist extravagance" and in 1953, having defeated the Labour Government, he set up a committee under C W Guillebaud, a Cambridge economist, to review "the present and prospective costs of the NHS".

Unfortunately for his hopes it reported that the "rising cost of the service in real terms... was kept within narrow bounds" and that accusations of "widespread extravagance" had not been borne out. In fact Britain was spending less on health care than countries like the United States, yet achieved better coverage and health results.

The Guillebaud report calmed the political argument for the next 20 years. In the meantime the public's affection for the NHS had been deepening steadily. When Margaret Thatcher tried to reverse the trend in the 1980s she faced an uphill task. Her admonition to people to "stand on their own feet" forced them to face up to the crippling costs of private medicine, from which the vast majority drew back in horror.

The national revulsion against Thatcherism began to have effect

Once again, under John Major, the political parties began vying with each other about how much they were prepared to spend on the NHS. Nonetheless the parties continued their rival pledges to keep taxes down. The two did not fit.

So what of the future? There are plenty of grumbles about the NHS. Everyone knows that there are serious inequalities in the provision of services between areas. Many buildings are outworn and out of date. People are living longer and the older generation makes more demands. Nursing, physiotherapy and other key elements are undervalued and underpaid. Junior doctors are still working excessive hours.

Consultants, conscious that there is a growing market for their skills, are constantly pressing for more opportunities for private practice to supplement their earnings. They are offered no financial inducements to make a whole-time commitment to the NHS. If they did, the problem of waiting lists would disappear.

Most challenging of all are the great strides which have taken place in medical techniques which can now offer expensive new life-extending treatments underpinned by new and ever more costly drugs.

Can the NHS survive, therefore, in its present form? The first part of the answer must be to ask what level of health care the majority of people would enjoy if there were no

NHS. They are aware of the lesson of America, the citadel of private insurance where 22 per cent of health care expenditure goes on administrative costs compared with some 6 per cent in the NHS, and where over 30 million Americans have no health insurance. The result is that the richest country in the developed world has the highest rate of infant mortality.

The main part of the answer, therefore, must be to make the British people face the facts. For too long they have been led to believe that they can have better health care without voting for the resources necessary to make it possible. "Tax" and "spend" have become dirty words.

Political parties try to outdo each other in offering marginal panaceas when what we need is an all-party consensus, first, on the need to maintain a universal health care system accessible to everyone, and secondly a plan of priorities within that system agreed by public discussion among politicians, the public and professionals. Thirdly, we must work out ways of protecting the NHS against the exorbitant demands of the transnational pharmaceutical companies which hold us all to ransom.

Our motto must be "education, education, education" in the realities behind a health care system worthy of a civilised society.

A view from the year 2048 on the second 50 years of the NHS. By Marshall Marinker

Look back to the future of healthcare in 2048

FUTURE

TOMORROW'S WORLD

which particular diseases, and with in a decade the new science of pharmacogenomics had revolutionised treatment. Before this, doctors behaved as though all lung cancers or heart attacks or senile dementias were essentially similar. This proved to have been a very rough and ready way of understanding what was wrong with the individual patient.

While all asthma and diabetes and cancers and heart attacks ap-



peared similar to one another in terms of the observations and measurements that doctors used to make, once the genetic differences could be analysed, it became clear why one patient with, say, high blood pressure, responded well to a particular drug, while another did not.

From about 2010 onwards, medicines were no longer the standard off-the-shelf remedies that doctors used to prescribe in the 20th century, but tailored precisely to the individual patient's genetic make-up.

The old pestle and mortar skills of the apothecaries were transformed by these pharmacogenomic technologies. Yet, even though the 21st century corner chemist shop looked like a cross between Nasa Control and a Manhattan cocktail bar, the white coated "chemist" behind the counter still represented the most approachable and human face of medical advice and help.

By the late 20th century, patients with a variety of chronic conditions had become used to having periodic checks on their blood pressure or monitoring. But these were always intermittent and a bit hit or miss. The measurement taken at the end of a frustrating wait to see the doctor could give no indication of the way the body was really behaving throughout the day. Now, with mini-

aturisation of biosensors and greater computer power, it became possible continuously to monitor dozens of chemical and physical body changes in vulnerable patients. These tiny sensors could be internal, woven into the fabric of a blood vessel, or worn externally as a wristwatch or ear ring. These would signal warnings of early changes so that previously sudden events like heart or asthma or epilepsy attacks could be anticipated and avoided.

As the power and specificity of medication increased, and cancers, for example, could be prevented or arrested by genetic manipulation and specific chemotherapy, the demand for surgery decreased. However, in response to trauma, or in the replacement of worn-out parts, surgical interventions remained necessary. At first such surgery was robot-assisted, surgeons often operating with robotic assistance by telecommunication over transcontinental distances. But with increasing computer power and imaging techniques, the presence of surgeons in the operating theatre, like the presence of airline pilots in the cockpit, became largely an exercise in public relations.

Early attempts to replace nursing skills with robotics failed from the start: somehow having one's back rubbed by an IBM artefact was simply never going to be as good as the real thing.

Marshall Marinker is Visiting Professor of General Practice at Guy's and St Thomas's Medical School and, along with Sir Michael Peckham, is editing "Clinical Futures", essays on the next 50 years of medical research, to be published by BMJ Books.

صحة من الامم

50 Years of the NHS



PAST

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Where Nye Bevan laid the foundation stones

Tredegear, a small town in South Wales, where one man's faith gave birth to Britain's health service. By Tony Heath

The Genesis of the National Health Service, which celebrates its 50th birthday tomorrow, can be traced to Tredegear, a Monmouthshire town where I was fortunate enough to spend my early years. Tucked away at the head of the Sirhowy Valley, it is the birthplace of Aneurin Bevan who patterned Britain's most respected national institution on the Tredegear Workmen's Medical Aid Society, a comprehensive healthcare service set up in 1870.

The society was financed by the pennies of miners, steelworkers and engineers – men like my father who sweated in the service of "King Coal", a monarch now sadly reduced to the status of a minor hanger-on. After surviving the horrors of the Western Front, he returned to Wales to work for the Tredegear Iron & Coal Company, later subsumed into the National Coal Board.

He was one of the 20,000 members of an organisation which, at its peak in the inter-war years, employed five GPs, a dentist, a chiropodist and an oculist. And financed the local hospital where my mother underwent major surgery. And paid convalescence fees for miners recovering from injuries sustained underground. Aged nine or 10, I fell while attempting to scale a quarry face and broke an arm. The society fixed it. Visits to Dr Trevor Bryant's surgery in Park Place, opposite the old gas works, were free and the treatment effective. I reckon the society did me proud. For when it was time to don khaki I was pronounced A1 with a physique that enabled me to scramble almost unscathed from a tank wrecked by German gunfire outside Bremen on St George's Day, 1945. But that's a long time ago and other happier memories swim to the surface whenever I turn off the A465 and head down Tredegear's Charles Street where on 15 November 1897, Bevan was born.

The town's huge workmen's institute was demolished not long ago. But standing in Morgan Street, looking at the empty space, recollections soon flooded back. The building was a Mecca for entertainment and enlightenment. It housed a library of 50,000 books covering everything from Methodism to Marxism – a well of learning to slake inquisitive thirsts. In the same building there was a cinema-theatre where Bevan addressed packed meetings. Charlie Chaplin and Grace Fields trod the Tredegear boards and Kathleen Ferrier once sang to an audience of 600 for a fee of 18 guineas.

The ballroom was claimed to be the best in South Wales, a forgivable exaggeration perhaps, but as I remember it, the floor was well sprung. Unauthorised visits to the institute's snooker tables threatened to interrupt my studies at the town's secondary school. A plaque fixed to the bank end of Table No.3 recorded a 141 break that Tredegear's Ray Beardon, six times world snooker champion, made on St David's Day in 1974. The table survives in a new home. Dr Bryant's old surgery is now a snooker parlour.

Changes, changes. Fook's Chinese Laundry and The Penny Bazaar are long gone from Commercial Street, the town's main thoroughfare. So is Rosenbaum's Pawnbrokers into which I was beckoned on Saturday mornings to light the fire in the back parlour. My parents' house, next to The Railway Inn, looked across to St George's vicarage where my best mate, Lewis Jones, lived. He left Wales to join a repertory company and achieved fame as Dr Parker Brown in the television soap General Hospital.

Tramping the mountains, riding a bike across old coal tips, sculptured into a mini-Switzerland

of greying hills and valleys by decades of wind and weather, taking the bus to the feshpots of Newport or Cardiff, travelling to Ebbw Vale in the next valley for a weekly guitar lesson in the room behind a cafe presided over by a huge and cheerful Italian – it was a life worth living for a teenager raised in the shelter of the NHS's forerunner.

One sunny Saturday, I turned up to learn more about diminished chords and found the cafe closed. Italy had entered the war and my jovial tutor was interned for the duration.

Mussolini's desire to mix in had disastrous consequences for South Wales's social life. Virtually every mining town boasted at least one cafe run by Italians. Tredegear excelled with Rabiotti's and Berni's. Both establishments were equipped with giant machines that hissed and roared to produce foaming coffee and deep secretive cabinets from which ice cream was dispensed. Aneurin Bevan's brother, William,

held court in Berni's from time to time. He delivered milk from a pony and trap and wore a khaki coverall. Cash in the leather satchel slung round his neck jingled as he sat down and started to hold forth on the principles of socialism. I listened, my ice cream slyly melting as his words flowed.

Aneurin championed ideas with a determination that was breathtaking, and articulated them with passion. As a young man, he walked the surrounding hills endlessly discussing politics and literature with members of the Query Club, a group of like-minded radicals who paid a weekly subscription to help members in trouble. In the Twenties, trouble invariably equalled poverty in the South Wales valleys. Bevan, one of 10 children, worked underground for the Tredegear Iron & Coal Company and was blacklisted because of his union activities. Election to the local council was followed by a spell on Monmouthshire county council and, in 1929, election

as MP for the Ebbw Vale constituency that embraced Tredegear. Then, as now, the Labour votes were not so much counted as weighed. Bevan died on 6 July, 1960. Monday will be another occasion for remembrance in his home town.

"Why did you leave?" I hear you ask. First to join up, lying about my age because my elder brother was incarcerated in an Italian prisoner-of-war camp and I naively believed I was replacing him. And when I came marching back home in a shiny demob suit clutching the pay-off cash it soon became apparent that there was little work for an aspiring scribbler. The link with Tredegear was maintained, tenuously perhaps, when I landed a job in London, sub-editing the now defunct Iron & Coal Trades Review, the weekly Bible of those industries. There was a buzz when local pits – Ty Trist, Pochin, Wylie, Markham, Oakdale – featured in a story. They have been wiped off the map along with the engineering works where my father spent most of his life. Re-development is on the cards but the ghosts of men like Bedlington Davies, a watchman who carried First World War shrapnel in his body until he died, or Percy Harse, a dexterous fitter, and George Kilner, a jack-of-all-trades, still seem to hover in the air.

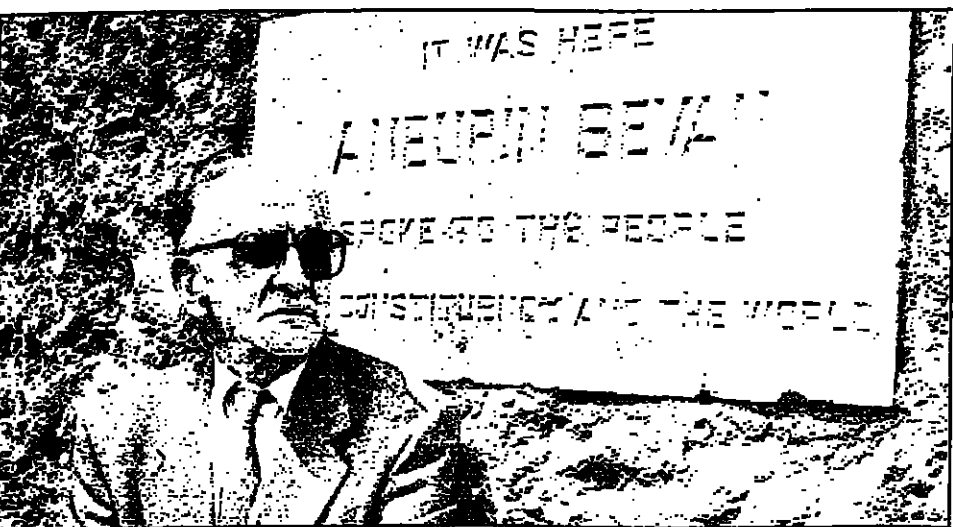
Philip Weekes, a Tredegear boy who rose to become South Wales director of the NCB, recalls with pride that when the miners' strike ended in 1985, rather than obey Ian McGregor's order to close collieries as quickly as possible, he turned the job in.

Tomorrow Glynys Kinnock (Neil is a Tredegear man), Michael Foot (who succeeded Bevan as MP after his mentor died 38 years ago), and Llew Smith, the current MP, are due to attend the town's celebrations. Four bronze plaques depicting the life and works of the NHS's creator will be unveiled, the town band will play and bus tours of the Aneurin Bevan trail have been arranged. I reckon there will be little rhetoric and plenty of contemplation of the monument bequeathed to the country, by the man Michael Foot describes as the greatest democratic socialist of the century.

Another monument to Bevan stands at Wanny-Pound, a bare hillside above the town where, long before television took hold, he addressed huge crowds. The four stone monoliths – three representing the towns of Tredegear, Ebbw Vale and Rhymney and the fourth and tallest of Bevan himself – have become a place of pilgrimage. And, yes, I like to stand there from time to time.

I suppose few under the age of 50 have a memory of the world which Tredegear's famous son helped to fashion. He often spoke in ways that challenged convention and reduced the stiff-necked to spluttering outrage. He was not susceptible to pedantry or prevarication and when he addressed meetings, whether in Kingsway Hall in London, or on his home ground, the air was charged with excitement.

For 50 years the NHS has more or less stood its ground. Even the Thatcher regime was reluctant to nibble away at territory first mapped out in Tredegear and then extended on 5 July 1948, to embrace the whole country. Bevan prefaced his book In Place of Fear with words that hold just as good today as they did during the years when he fought for the ideals that underpin the service he created: "Not even the apparently enlightened principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number' can excuse indifference to individual suffering." Tredegear leads a collective "Amen" to that.



Top: Aneurin Bevan's nephews at the memorial stones (Dragon News/ David Hurst); middle: the Workmen's Hall in 1941; bottom: Tony Heath at Nye Bevan's plaque in Tredegear (Phil Stobart/ Huw Evans)

APPOINTMENT TIMES

- 1948 In London Brock and Sellars carry out first successful heart surgery
Streptomycin introduced
Olympic Games held in London
National Health service launched
- 1949 Clothing rationing ends
Power to charge for prescriptions introduced
Cost of NHS is 2s 6d (12.5p) per head per week – 1/4d more than budget
- 1950 Ceiling imposed on NHS spending
Korean War begins
- 1951 Charges for dental and optical appliances approved
Apartheid introduced in South Africa
- 1952 College of General Practitioners formed
King George VI dies. Elizabeth proclaimed Queen
- 1953 John Gibbon invents the heart-lung machine
Two Cambridge scientists propose theory of DNA
- 1954 First kidney transplant performed
Roger Bannister runs the first four-minute mile
- 1955 Ultrasound introduced in obstetrics
Commercial television goes on air
- 1956 Immunisation against polio is introduced
Parking meters introduced
- 1957 TV detector vans introduced
Queen makes first Christmas broadcast
- 1958 BMA report says smoking is chief cause of cancer
44-hour week introduced for nurses
- 1959 Mental Health Act comes into force
The Mini launched – costing £500
- 1960 Last National Service call-ups
Hearing aids on NHS
- 1961 Yuri Gagarin is the first man in space
Contraceptive pill available on NHS
- 1962 Oral polio vaccine introduced
Cuban missile crisis
- 1963 Kennedy assassinated in Dallas
First liver transplant
- 1964 First Brook Street Clinic opens to give contraceptive advice to the unmarried
- 1965 Legal blood alcohol limits introduced for drivers
Birth rate on downward trend
- 1966 Measles vaccination starts
England win World Cup
116 children and 28 adults killed in Aberfan disaster
- 1967 First heart transplant performed in Cape Town
Abortion Bill becomes law
- 1968 Epidural anaesthetics promise less painful births
Martin Luther King shot dead
- 1969 Steptoe and Edwards pioneer test-tube fertilisation
North Sea oil discovered
Neil Armstrong is first man on moon
- 1970 18-year-olds get the vote
Plans to decentralise the NHS under 90 new health authorities
- 1971 Decimal currency launched
Christian Barnard performs first heart and lung transplant
66 football fans die in Ibrox disaster
- 1972 Kidney donor cards introduced
- 1973 VAT introduced
Watergate hearings begin
First CAT scans
- 1974 Free family planning for all on NHS
Nurses get 58 per cent pay rise
- 1975 Vietnam War ends
Dutch Elm disease ravages rural Britain
Half of NHS's 5,000 beds are closed
- 1976 Mao Tse-Tung dies at 82
Bjorn Borg, 20, becomes the youngest Wimbledon champion for 45 years
- 1977 Elvis Presley dies
Space Shuttle makes maiden flight
- 1978 The world's first test-tube baby, Louise Joy Brown, is born in Oldham
- 1979 Three Mile Island nuclear crisis
First fallopian tube transplant
- 1980 SAS storms the Iranian Embassy
John Lennon shot dead in New York
- 1981 Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer marry
- 1982 Falklands war
American dentist receives mechanical heart
- 1983 Front seat belts become mandatory
£1 coin enters circulation
- 1984 AIDS virus is discovered
IRA bomb blasts Conservative Party conference in Brighton
- 1985 Computerised screening programme to cut cervical cancer deaths announced
Live Aid concerts raise £40M for famine relief
Blood donations screen for AIDS virus
- 1986 Chernobyl is world's worst civil nuclear disaster
First triple transplant of heart, lung and liver
- 1987 200 die in Herald of Free Enterprise ferry disaster
Tien An Men Square protests
- 1988 Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine introduced
Pan American jumbo jet crashes on Lockerbie leaving 270 dead
Government announces radical review of NHS
- 1989 Hepatitis C virus discovered
Berlin wall demolished
Hillsborough disaster
- 1990 Hurricane batters southern England
NHS and Community Care Act becomes law
- 1991 Patient's Charter introduced
Gulf War
- 1992 Wounded by Bosnia evacuated to UK
General Synod votes for ordination of women
- 1993 Calman Report on hospital staffing
National Blood Authority established
- 1994 Flesh-eating bug scare hits Britain
Mandela becomes President of South Africa
- 1995 Re-organisation of cancer services
Water restrictions after driest summer since 1659
- 1996 Link between BSE and CJD established
16 primary school children murdered in Dunblane
- 1997 Labour elected for first time in 19 years
Diana, Princess of Wales, dies in Paris car crash

Gore? It's been done before

What can a rebel do when there's nothing left to rebel against? Become obsessed with bodily functions, if the Turner shortlist is any indication. By Richard D North

LET US BE charitable: the Turner Prize short list released this week probably contains some work which will hold our attention when we see it this winter at the Tate. A sucker for images of the sea, and remembering Turner's devotion to the apparatus of sea-rescue, I shall happily gawp at Tacita Dean's *Disappearance At Sea* and perhaps find it a trigger for reflection.

But the jokes really are now wearing quite thin. We seem to have come close to exhausting this version of the "modern". This collection of workers in turt, genitalia and videoed tedium come at the fag-end of a century which has played interminably with "installation" art as a conscious rebellion against the flat surface, let alone representation. The themes have been done to death.

Two of the four finalists - Sam Taylor-Wood and Chris Ofili - are ex-Sensation exhibitors, which will dull the interest in them. But the sense of déjà vu goes far deeper than that. The past 12 months or so have shown the real difficulty faced by this generation.

Chris Ofili, a Briton of Nigerian descent, works in elephant dung and is part of a widespread modern preoccupation with bodily functions of every sort. As the Quick and the Dead show at the Royal College of Art demonstrated last winter, curiosity and mawkishness have always been at work as artists considered those fine twins, vitality and mortality. They may have been depicting or allegorising veins or genitalia (as Turner finalist Cathy de Monchaux appears to be doing), but they were looking also for soul

or at any rate meaning. The youngsters are essaying the sacred and the profane, and their elders, if not their betters, have looked in the same places for both.

Tom Phillips showed skulls at the Dulwich Gallery last year, and though they were not as gory as Marc Quinn's cranial efforts at the Sensation show, the availability of a comparison of the work of a grand old man and an Academician to boot, and the oh-so new offering of the anti-Academician tendency was telling. The theme of the body as the surprising temple of the spiritual is perennial and inexhaustible. But

This lot are in the double bind that they can not rebel against anything much since they follow hot on the heels of such thorough-going rebels

the new wave is adding very little, even in terms of style. The forms they are using have already been plundered, and have had the surprise knocked out of them.

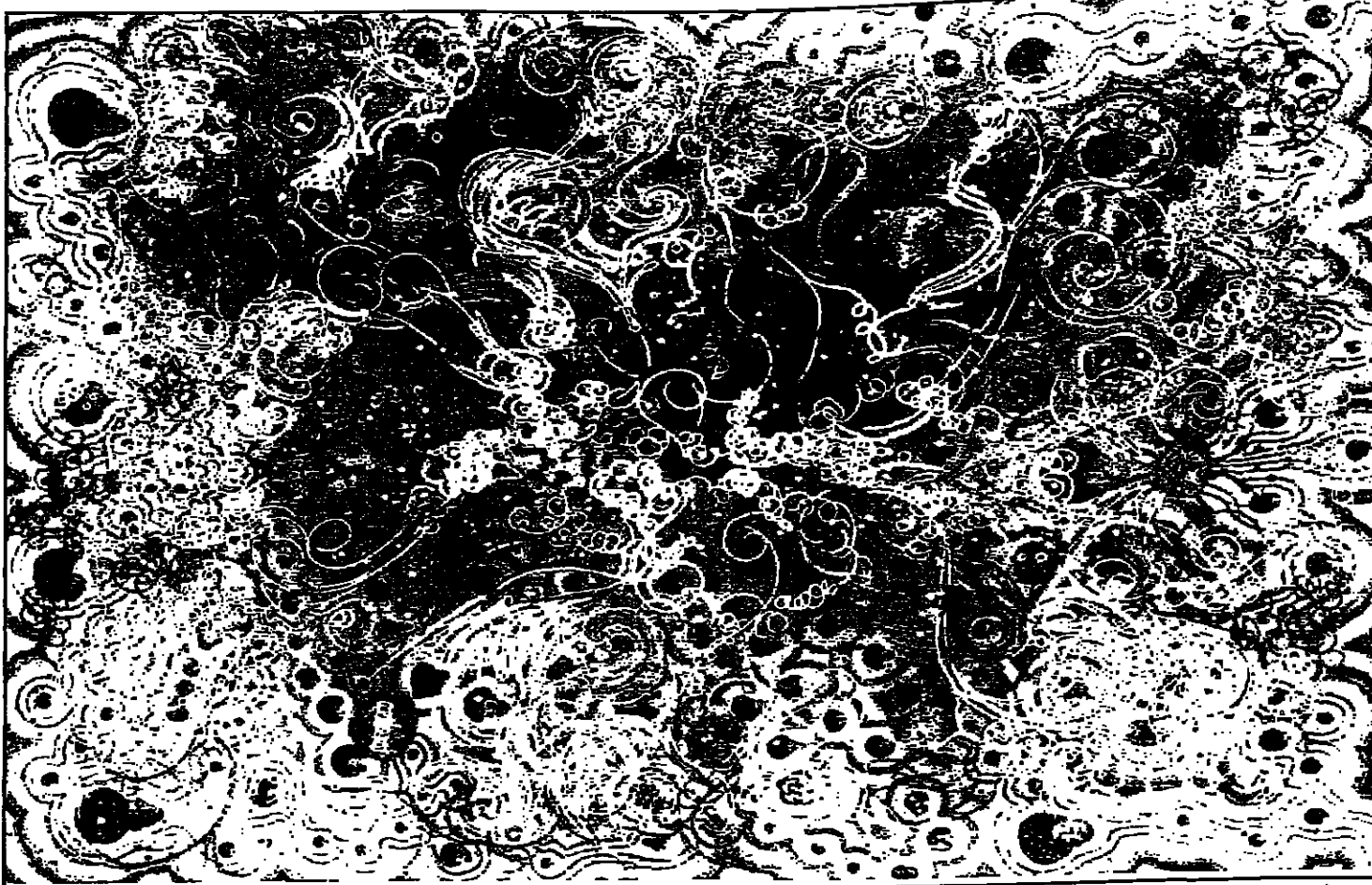
The market in gormlessness has long been cornered. A show devoted to the grand old man of shock, the Austrian Hermann Nitsch, at 30, Underwood Gallery last winter gave us videos and blood-stained shrouds, and animal entrails. Nitsch has worked in these media for more than 30 years, and has made of them ob-

jects which at first appear only obscene and then gradually gain a status as reflections on the sacred and profane. Ruskin was only a little freer than we can be when he commented on the "muddy struggles of the unhappy Germans". It is hardly likely that anyone from the British culture would get to the heart of grimness and its relations to spirituality before our continental cousins.

In painting, too, we see how difficult it is to develop much outrage. Jenny Saville can paint fat human bodies, no question. But she can add relatively little value to the work of Lucian Freud (on display now at the Tate), which itself feels like a very happy sequel to the work of Stanley Spencer. It might not matter that a modern painter is "merely" part of a developing tendency; it might indeed be seen as an honourable evolution. The difficulty for us when we look at Saville is to decide whether she has made progress, or just got caught up in trying to do something - anything - a little grimmer in its honesty than the tradition she inherited.

This point is made by a show - just finished - at the Anthony d'Offay Gallery, near Oxford Street. It showed work by Joseph Beuys, whose "vitruvians" - done in the Sixties, Seventies and Eighties - were deadpan collections of familiar objects presented in a rather creepy way, in museum-style glass cases. Some of them had a pharmaceutical element to them.

They are works which have acquired that aura (it is always now called a patina) which time confers on such things. They become, like



Main picture: Chris Ofili's 'Afrodiziz' which incorporates elephant dung on canvas; above left, Tacita Dean's 'Disappearance At Sea'; above right, Sam Taylor-Wood's laser disc projection entitled 'Atlantic'

the work of Joseph Cornell, who made collections of familiar objects in the Forties, pieces which gradually lose their power to shock, and gain instead a moving, memorial sort of impact. Probably something like this will happen to the works of Damien Hirst. Beuys also seems eerily to prefigure the work of Marc Quinn: they both use refrigeration as an image of the need for watchfulness, for preparedness, against a world whose main predilection is decay.

An age shaken by war and holocaust was bound to attempt the extreme. But this is also an age which has spawned generations who suffer the ennui of affluence. Andy Warhol made an enormous impact with his accounts of materialism and tedium, and here once again the recent past stymies the new generation.

The Turner contestant Sam Taylor-Wood, like Warhol, points cameras at the ostensibly boring, and - yes - the deadpan gaze reveals something uncomfortable to us, as

do the remarkable films of Patrick Kellar, with his barely-moving shots in *London* and *Robinson in Space* (the latter shown recently on TV). But whether Taylor-Wood is really moving us forward is much less clear, and the game, as revealed at Sensation, soon palls.

The self-consciously "modern" in the arts is perennially in trouble. It is almost always the opposite of what it seeks to be. It is reactionary in the literal sense that it is a response to whatever went before. But

this lot are in the double bind that they can not rebel against anything very much, since they follow hot on the heels of such thorough-going rebels.

The most normal, and the most healthy, reaction of the young would now be to rediscover the merits of Laura Knight.

The modern young should hie to Cornwall and work on discovering how to handle the play of late evening summer sunlight on the fabric of holidaying children.

Why they call him the king

THERE WAS a standing ovation before he had played a note. It was that kind of night - but then for BB King it must be like that all the time. When your first gig was more than half a century ago, perhaps you have a right to expect it.

He is a giant of a man, his guitar dwarfed by his girth, his shiny tux losing the battle to cover his torso. It was clear, too, as he kicked off with "Let The Good Times Roll", that the lungs still produced the goods, even if he is 72 years old. His voice is remarkable - at full blast like boulders cracking in an avalanche, then descending to an evil growl.

There are no instrumental problems, either: for the man who has the tightest grip on the title of Godfather of Rock Guitar. The trademarks of his sound - huge vibrato and voice-like note bending - are intact, though he was not helped by one or two dodgy arrangements. Synth strings are strictly for Yazoo records and should be allowed nowhere near the blues.

Riley B King (the "BB" comes from his old nickname, "Blues Boy")

BLUES

BB KING
SUMMER SOUL FESTIVAL
ROYAL ALBERT HALL



BB King: A giant of a man

launched into a classic tale of losing your woman to another man.

Before cruising into the final straight, he took a chair and chewed the fat: "I sure love the Albert Hall," he said. "It goes back quite a few years, the last time I was here." (The first time he played Britain, in the Sixties, one reviewer described him as "an up-and-coming guitarist of the Clapton/Peter Green school". Oops.)

From his chair he conducted a

sing-along version of "Since I Met You Baby". This was dispensable, and a certain male reluctance to join in made it sound like a hymn, oddly appropriate in the surroundings. As the audience clapped along to the band, he talked about the old days: "I come from Indianola, Mississippi. If you were black and a blues musician in my neighbourhood, it was like being black twice." Fifty albums later, he can be as black as he likes.

Like the unfortunate community singing, the funk work-out that followed was unnecessary, too. All you really want from BB King, the man who gave Clapton and the rest their reason for living, is the blues, pure and simple. Those notes that can sound like a baby sighing or a broken-down man howling into the wind because his woman done him wrong. And as the show built to a climax, he delivered. And when he delivered you could see why he is still King of the Blues.

This review appeared in some editions of yesterday's paper

CHRIS MAUME

Tavener's truth is out there

CLASSICAL

TAVENER PREMIERES
HELLENIC CENTRE
ST ANDREW'S
HOLBORN

of music were repeated ritualistically - a passionate opening string outburst was followed by Greek modal melismatic lines from the soprano Patricia Rozario, radiant in a taxing solo part; a tamboura maintained an intermittent drone, and the work was punctuated by heart-rending alleluias - "receding from darkness, the rest from labours". Indeed, only an obscure interruption from a mobile phone momentarily broke the spell.

In the Academy of Ancient Music's programme at St Andrew's, Holborn, given as part of the City of London Festival, Tavener's work was put in a context of sacred and profane music by Purcell. At first this seemed a little odd - magnificent as these performances were, Purcell's vigorous dance-based rhythms and his expressive vocal

lines seemed all too worldly to sit well with Tavener's visions of another life. Even *The Blessed Virgin's Expostulation*, beautifully sung by Julia Gooding, was full of doubt and fear - a long way from the serene certainties of orthodox faith. With the intensely moving rendition of *Dido's Lament* by Julia Gooding, though, and the new work, commissioned by the AAM for their 25th anniversary, the different strands made a rapprochement. Serene acceptance of death and the opening of a door into eternity were at the heart of these pieces. *Eternity's Sunrise* set words by Blake for soprano (again a radiant Patricia Rozario) and baroque instruments, plus handbells; again soaring alleluias punctuated long melismatic vocal lines, seemingly set to leave this world altogether.

Perhaps the secret of appreciating Tavener's music is to believe that there is another world to open doors into? Then all falls into place. After music like this, applause seems superfluous - but what else is there?

LAURENCE HUGHES

CLASSIC CARTOON

MARTIN PLIMMER ON PONT



Half-an-hour's rest after meals

Graham Laidler, who signed himself Pont, used both hard and timorous lines, bold and indistinct forms, dark hatching and nebulosity; often combining these in one frame to direct our attention around his composition, like a master painter who has forgotten his colours. He was manifestly an Artist, and we are lucky Pont was snared at an early age by *Punch*, where he was able to concentrate on the subtleties of character and situation which fine artists often feel are beneath their notice (if they notice them in the first place). Pont rendered small things magnificent. Look at the girl's insouciant pose, the omnipresent dogs, the flapping maid, the impending window cleaner... The closest this gets to a conventional cartoon is the picture of an Olympic drum beating event on the wall. When Pont died of poliomyelitis in 1940 at the age of 32, the pace of his developing technique was frustrating evidence of the master yet to come.



MODERN ART

gallery

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صكتان من الاموال

Fakirs, saints and flagellants

All human life gathered at a festival in Pakistan's Sindh province. Their mission? To celebrate the life of the original sitar hero. By Martin Gordon

TWO STRAY dogs lie in the cooling river of urine that meanders down from the 250,000 poetry lovers camped out in the fields. This is Bhit Shah, an otherwise tranquil town in the Pakistani province of Sindh, where the temperature is rising into the mid-forties (about 115 Fahrenheit) and facilities are stretched to breaking point.

Bhit Shah was home to Shah Latif Bhitai, Sufi poet, musician and subsequently saint. About the time of the anniversary of his death (the festival only takes place under the full moon), devotees from all walks of life gather in his home town to pay their respects, to visit the shrine in which he is buried and to participate in the celebrations, which this year include such unlikely Islamic titillations as a funeral, doggerms and dancing girls. The last perform safely out of reach, above the heads of the masses in rickety wooden cages which sway with their every movement. Their audience, a silent, sullen mass of (male) country folk, is both attracted to and repelled by the brazen spectacle. They see me watching this medieval sight and throw fireworks until I leave.

Shah Latif was a contradictory figure - a musician who was never heard to perform a note but who composed songs still heard to this day; an unlettered poet who was the first literary figure in Sindh to develop a body of written work. His Risalo has been compared by some, in stature and significance at least, to the works of Shakespeare. In his time, the traditions of Sindh were oral - when an acolyte first presented the written collection of his poems, he ungratefully threw it in a lake, saying that he did not wish his words to be preserved on paper. Later, he had second thoughts.)

Once a year, when the faithful, the not-so faithful and the merely opportunistic gather in Bhit Shah (Bhit means dune) to celebrate his life, the town's usual population of 20,000 multiplies one-hundred-fold, with enmeshed, snake-charmers, midgits, flagellants and transvestites all jostling for some space and a little cash.

The highlight of the trs festival is the three-day long presentation of Shah Latif's music at the Shah Latif Auditorium. At an occasion which is as important to be seen at as to participate in, Pakistan's politicians are out in force. An edgy atmosphere pervades, abetted by the

recent nuclear tests as well as the unbearable heat. (A taxi driver in Karachi informs me that the temperature, increasing by one or two degrees centigrade per day, is a result of the tests.) A selection of the finest musicians from Sindh (and from other parts of the country) takes the stage for an allotted five minutes to demonstrate both prowess and devotion to Shah Latif. If it is all going a bit downhill, then all that is needed is a rousing shout of "Jie Latif!" (Long live Latif!) in order to get the crowd worked up again. The soulful passion of Sohrab Fakir, with his orange clothes, hair and beard, accompanied by his 20-strong troupe of singers and musicians, contrasts with Anju Ara, presenting herself as a Sufi Kylie Minogue complete with fatwah-provoking make-up and a notebook with a fluffy cat on it, from which she reads all the words. She even reads the choruses, which are, in true pop fashion, merely the same lines repeated an infinite number of times. Maybe she has a short-term memory problem. Or maybe there's a Sufic subtext that I'm missing. She goes down a treat, anyway.

Within the auditorium, the atmosphere is none the less dour, with no evident enjoyment to be seen on stage, save for the house band who present a splendidly silly selection of jingles to introduce each artist. By the last day, they are excelling themselves and can barely get to the end of their latest ridiculous masterpiece without dissolving into hysterics.

The orange clothes, hair and beard of Sohrab Fakir contrasts with Anju Ara, a Sufi Kylie Minogue

Contributing to the lacklustre ambience is the dominating line-up of politicians occupying the front rows of seats, each with his own armed bodyguard and entourage of flunkies. Their baleful presence looms over the proceedings, with the camera crews filming the front rows and totally ignoring the musicians. When the Chief Minister ar-



Once a year, the faithful gather in Bhit Shah and the towns undergoes a population explosion

Shez Dawood

rives, security rises to a fever pitch. The previously urbane Secretary of Culture rants at the secret policeman who is trying to throw his friends out of the front row. "Don't you tell me about protocol!" he shrieks. The policeman searches for a suitable riposte and comes up with: "I will tell you about protocol!" I am quizzed by a suspicious Army type as to what I am doing there. "Are you ... foreigner?" he probes, and then goes on to ask me if I drink Pakistani water.

The eagle-nosed Wahid Ali from Hyderabad proves himself to be a contender for Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan's recently vacated throne: he closes the show with an impassioned, snarling vocal, and then leads everyone in the festival theme song. The politicians having long departed, the entire cast is speedily hustled off stage and the 1998 Urs of Shah Latif is concluded.

This is confirmed to me in the morning by the large hole in the wall of our accommodation which yesterday contained an air conditioning system. Outside, men struggle

by with dusty generators balanced on bicycles. We take the hint and pack our bags.

Invited to visit one of the performers, the venerable Mohammed Khan Fakir, we find him after 14 hours and one sandstorm in his village of Mirpur Sakro, which lies in the district of Hyderabad. The *surinder*, a plaintive forerunner of the instrument the *sarangi*, is gradually disappearing from public view and Mohammed Khan is one of the few remaining players. Despite being popular with governmental bodies (they sometimes provide accommodation for favoured musicians), he continues to live in grinding poverty on a tiny plot of bare land, sharing his water pump with his extended family of twenty, a goat, cows, stray dogs and cats and two rabbits. Fakir in Arabic means "poor man".

We are welcomed with singular hospitality - cooked food is produced, along with beds to lie on and delicious clove tea to drink. Even in this outlying suburb of the Thar desert, a television dominates the

scene, and a video cassette is produced for our delight. It features Sean Connery - the violence proves to be acceptable, but the kissing is fast forwarded because of the presence of females. Mohammed Khan's elder

A film on television features Sean Connery. The violence is acceptable but the kissing is fast forwarded

son (and *surinder* constructor) Hussein uses fluent sign language to assist with the linguistic complications that arise. When the ensemble gradually retires for the night, the television presents a Sindh language soap opera, more violent than Sean Connery, but featuring Boney M on the soundtrack. It is very loud and remains so until about 4.30am, when the

lights go off and the flies come out. In the morning, we are led around the village (more for Mohammed Khan's benefit than ours, I feel) and the climax of the tour is his photo session in the local cafe, where he is mobbed by his countrymen.

A final visit to the shrine to make our farewells reveals a stream of supplicants circling the tomb, rejoicing, entreating and singing, and, in the case of one bearded policeman, sobbing silently. During his life, Shah Latif Bhitai was an outsider and iconoclast - today, he exerts a unifying force over the people of Sindh, and is much loved by those with whom, in his lifetime, he had no common cause - politicians, religious fanatics, literary lions. He is a veritable people's poet and more - he is the "queen of desert songs". Mai Bhagi encapsulated it earlier when she sang: "Oh Bhitai, let God rain light over your *bhit*, you fulfilled all my wishes!" There is no doubt in the minds of this year's supplicants that Shah Latif will protect them from the hard rain that some feel is about to fall.

ARTS DIARY

DAVID LISTER

THIS WEEK'S Turner Prize shortlist is vibrant and challenging, even if half of it is of artists working in film and video. It won't be too many years, I suspect, before we have an all-video list. But if the list is a good one, the procedures of the Turner jury under the estimable Tate director Nicholas Serota need some fine tuning. The artist Sam Taylor Wood most certainly deserves her place on the shortlist. But one of the judges was Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant who commissioned Taylor Wood to make a video for the Pet Shop Boys during the last year, the year being examined by the Turner judges. Tennant should have left the room while her merits were being discussed. Simon Wilson, curator of communications (a wonderful Post-Modernist title) at the Tate tells me that judges tend to present artists they admire, but in the end the whole thing is settled by a vote. "All the jurors come with special relationships with certain artists," he says. As curator of arts diaries, I'm not sure that's good enough. Of course, there has been no impropriety here whatsoever, but perceptions are important. Sam Taylor Wood would probably have walked onto the shortlist anyway. But accusations of disingenuousness in the contemporary art world are common enough already. Arts prizes in all art forms have too many people on judging panels working closely with the entrants. It should not be beyond the organisers to choose judges a more removed.

I WATCHED the first night of Andrew Lloyd Webber's latest on my own, and slightly edgily, as my companion whose ticket I was clutching had not materialised. It emerged that he was forbidden entry to the Aldwych Theatre by a posse of strong arm men even though he told them he was meeting the holder of his ticket in the foyer. "I've got a job to do," snarled the burly chap, barring the way. As this was a young teenager involved, it seemed to me remarkably heavy handed. An evening at the theatre should be a civilised, cultural and social affair. It is not the GB summit, is it? So please dispense with the bouncers, Andrew.

Professor Roger Scruton

An article on 21 January suggested that Professor Scruton has written at length about homosexuals being outlaws who should be excluded from having any stake in society. We accept that this statement misrepresents Professor Scruton's views, and we apologise to him.

A land where you can dress your dog in women's clothes

ANYBODY CAN lazily spout a cliché, most people, with a little thought, can avoid one or give one an ironic twist. The hardest approach is the one Ian Peacock took in *This American Life* (Radio 3, Monday-Friday): to take a cliché absolutely seriously, and to explore it so thoroughly that it comes up sounding fresh and meaningful.

He started this survey of the United States through its broadcasting media with a cliché so tired you need benzadrine and a cattle prod just to get it out of bed: a channel-hop around American radio, bursts of

loopy preachers and hard-sell commercials punctuated by tiny eruptions of static, the whole thing saying, in effect, "Here we are in America, and isn't it big and strange?"

For once, though, it genuinely did sound strange: Peacock's preachers had an air of martyred earnestness, the ads he'd picked were several degrees more frenetic than usual. It moved with an audacious jitteriness, and ended on a note of high oddity, an unexplained voice urging: "If you wanted to, you could dress your dog in women's clothing." More tellingly, Peacock didn't

THE WEEK ON RADIO

REVIEWED BY ROBERT HANKS

just let it lie, but set out to match this farago with the world outside, finding ordinary New Yorkers who will watch dog shows and weather TV for hours together. After this brave beginning, though, the sheer scale and diversity of the subject seemed

to overwhelm Peacock. Unable to navigate his way through the sprawling metropolis of American broadcasting, he kept on fetching up in the cul-de-sac marked "Only in America": not analysing, just shrugging his shoulders. Still, it was a brash enough, smart enough series to leave you wondering what Peacock's next project will be.

Meanwhile, the Radio 4 cycle of Sherlock Holmes stories is finally gasping to completion, after 56 short stories and three novels, with a two-part adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Radio 4, Sun-

day). Clive Merrison's sarcastic, superior Holmes is an ingenious creation. Unlike, say, Basil Rathbone he doesn't present him as a kind of proto-Spock, emotions held in check by reason. Rather, reason leaves him prey to a different set of emotions, perpetually amused and repelled by the drama of his adventures.




Dispatching Watson to Dartmoor, he warns him: "This is an ugly business. Watson, an ugly, dangerous business. I give you my word, I'll be very glad to see you back safe and sound in Baker Street." As Merrison delivers the line, that "ugly" be-

comes a drawn-out moment of self-conscious melodrama, and "I give you my word" sounds like the desperate affirmation of a man who knows he can never sound sincere.

But after however many years it is - seven or eight, at a guess - the characterisation has become routine. When Watson's reaction to one of Holmes's deductive leaps is a shade too blasé, Holmes inquires: "Whatever happened to 'Good heavens, Holmes, that's amazing!'?" It's just too flip, too self-referential. Time for Holmes to take up bee-keeping, I'm afraid.

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

BY FIONA STURGES

	OVERVIEW	CRITICAL VIEW	ON VIEW	OUR VIEW
 THE BAND BLUR	Mockney Brit-pop pin-ups take to the slippery stage at Glastonbury, as Saturday's headlining act.	"Muddier than the ground that we had spent the weekend trudging through," growled Ryan Gilbey, who described them as "rent-a-headliners". On observing a punter waving a pair of comedy underpants, he quips, "you had to concede that those enormous Y-fronts possibly had rather more charisma than Albam did." The <i>Times</i> was more sympathetic to Blur's plight, admitting "the damp festival	There are no more dates planned.	Entertaining a soaked crowd was a tall order, but Blur would have done better not to add to the soggy atmosphere with their miserable melodies. A bit more welly all round, please.
 THE EXHIBITION PATRICK HERON	A retrospective of the 78 year-old Cornish artist, characterised by his decorative designs and sunburst colours.	"Faced with this array, can any of us do more than go mmm and aaah and hmph and uh?" asked Tom Lubbock, confessing: "I am the wrong sort of viewer. I stand before this art of pleasure and don't get much pleasure from it." The <i>Evening Standard</i> cuttingly deemed it "an exhibition of no importance and scant interest. Nothing in it is in any way original," and dubbed Heron a "monkey-see, monkey-do	Tate Gallery, SW1 (0171 887 8000) to 6 September. Daily 10am-5pm.	One can only stare at bright colours for only so long. Heron's paintings may provide a fleeting visceral thrill but they offer little intellectual or aesthetic enlightenment.
 THE FILM LOVE AND DEATH ON LONG ISLAND	Richard Kwietniowski's debut tells the tale of an old fossil's infatuation with a young teen idol. Starring John Hurt and Jason Priestley.	Ryan Gilbey was moved by Hurt's performance, noting, "when Hurt hurts, you really know about it" and praising him for "identifying the unsparing and single-mindedness of obsession." <i>Time Out</i> marvels at Kwietniowski "for his elegant script and the light, civilised tone of his direction," marking the film as "a genuinely literate, affectionate fish-out-of-water comedy." The <i>Daily Mail</i> admits "it's as	On general release, cert 15, 93 mins.	Brilliant as ever, John Hurt gives his all to the role while Kwietniowski's direction shows great promise.



**On Sites
of Special
Scientific
Interest rare
birds should
be safe. But
Matthew Brace
finds that
many are
still under
threat**

The lapwings are dying. The sight of their black, wispy crests and their once familiar pee-wit calls are becoming scarce. Just six years ago, the *Complete Book of British Birds* said these wading birds, also known as green plovers, could be found throughout Britain and almost always in flocks, some numbering several thousand. However, disturbingly meagre counts have prompted concern that the population is now dangerously low.

In the South-west the lapwing has virtually disappeared, the North Staffordshire moors have witnessed a decline from 306 breeding pairs to 85 during the past 10 years, and in Wales the population has halved, according to the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

We have been here before with other birds and, again, the increasing intensification of agriculture must shoulder some of the blame, but so too should poor management of the 6,510 designated nature sites that are supposed to be sanctuaries for such birds.

So annoyed is the RSPB with the neglect of Sites of Special Scientific Interest that it has just launched a campaign to toughen the laws protecting them, to prevent them "bleeding to death" through total apathy.

One such SSSI they would love to protect is Rainham Marsh, a scrappy, 80-hectare plot of scrub land lying next to the north bank of the Thames estuary, just beyond the Dagenham Ford plant in east London. It is part of a larger SSSI - the 480-hectare Inner Thames Marshes - and is one of the few sites where lapwings are doing well and where, according to the RSPB and the Environment Agency, the lapwing's fight-back could begin.

But the birds are not safe yet. A battle has been raging over Rainham for more than a decade and the latest salvo has recently been fired in the form of a revised planning application from the owners, the London Borough of Havering, and the Government's urban regeneration quango, English Partnerships. The council describes the site as unused and of strategic importance to development, and licks its lips in anticipation of erecting a business park.

The original application included a petrol station, drive-through restaurant and a hotel and caused so much ire in the borough that a revised plan released in the past two weeks erased those items. Think of the jobs, the council argues, claiming as many as 8,600 will be created directly and indirectly, and it is a strong argument, considering unemployment in East London is running at 7.2 per cent.

And would anyone miss Rainham Marsh? On the surface it looks a mess. Its grasses and reeds are



A premature arrival at Bristol Zoo, this spur-winged lapwing is becoming increasingly rare as its natural habitat is destroyed

Graham Cox/SWNS

The tiny lapwing takes on the mighty developer

blown by foul air from factories and a landfill site.

Fly-tippers have left piles of used mattresses and rubbish bags littering the fringes of the site. A new extension to the A13 into London has sliced it in two and an unknown quantity of dirty run-off from an industrial park next door has seeped in to drainage ditches and is being investigated by the Environment Agency.

It is little more than waste ground to those who glimpse it while whizzing past in their cars or from a plane coming in to land at City airport in the Docklands - the kind of

place that might come in handy for East End gangsters wanting to discreetly dispose of their enemies. The kind of place ripe for economic regeneration.

What the passers-by are looking at, in fact, is London's biggest SSSI, the capital's only remaining area of extensive grazing marsh and a place of national importance to wildlife that has been virtually untouched for hundreds of years.

A spokesman for the Environment Agency, the Government's green watchdog, which has been carrying out ecological surveys on the site, said it has the potential to be a

vital breeding ground for lapwings and other wading birds and a springboard for them to migrate to other nearby havens. It gives them a rare, undisturbed roost spot when high tides force them off the mud banks of the Thames.

An EA report soon to be released is expected to classify the marsh as a nationally important habitat for insects, too.

It is home to the rare Roesel's Bush Cricket, the Great Silver Diving Beetle and the Scarce Emerald Damselfly. The water vole, the subject of a government rescue plan, is also found here.

"This is an important place for wildlife. If development goes ahead here it will mean the largest single loss of SSSI in England since the Wildlife and Countryside Act was passed in 1981," said the EA spokesman.

Having insisted there is no alternative brownfield site available for the kind of development they have in mind and disputes some of the wildlife statistics, claiming Rainham's wildlife value "has seriously declined".

"But if development goes ahead there will be a package of benefits for nature conservation which more

than compensates, providing over twice the area that will be lost to development," said a spokesman. The council said the most valuable part of the Inner Thames Marshes SSSI was the eastern end including Wennington and Aveley Marshes, both with Green Belt protection and not earmarked for development.

The conservationists' brows remain furrowed. After all, Stevenage thought its Green Belt land was untouchable until new homes were needed and no alternative site was found.

Rainham has already escaped the clutches of an American de-

veloper who wanted to turn it into a vast theme park. The company pulled out, possibly because the cost of simply preparing the watery site for safe construction is understood to have come to roughly £16m. Only time will tell if it will escape again.

Both camps in the struggle for London's last grazing marsh look set for a showdown soon, probably taking the form of a public inquiry. In the meantime, the lapwings are taking advantage of the slowly turning wheels of local authority planning procedure and trying to claw their way back.



WHAT'S ON THIS WEEKEND

KICK YOUR heels and jingle your bells at the Morris in the Forest Festival, to be held this weekend in the 19th-century spa town of Llanwrtyd Wells, in Powys. The festival includes displays by Morris dancing teams from England and Wales, two Ceilidhs and an organised, nine-mile circular walk through wooded countryside by the river Irton. There are entertainments at checkpoints and a halfway picnic and, if you're still energetic, you

can join a rock 'n' roll workshop before viewing the Morris procession and Dance Spots in the town square on Sunday.

Llanwrtyd Wells Tourist Information can be contacted on 01591 610666. The Saturday Ceilidh costs £5 for adults or £2.50 for children, the walk costs £4 and the Sunday workshop, between 10am and 11.45am, costs £3.

SALLY KINDBERG

How to make a muck of it

**The inevitable
build-up of dung
on a farm calls
for imaginative
methods of
disposal. By
Duff Hart-Davis**

ANYONE WHO keeps cattle, horses, pigs or, for that matter, elephants, is faced with the same conundrum: how to dispose of the dung? Once manure has rotted down, it can go back on to the fields as valuable organic fertiliser; but decomposition takes time, and carting and spreading are expensive, labour-intensive operations that tend to be put off for as long as possible.

Farmers with seriously large accumulations have one compensation. The destructive - or maybe I should say "consumptive" - power of a big muck-heap is amazing. It will avidly "eat" dead sheep and cows; their bodies, once buried, are never seen again. This method of disposal is, of course, illegal, but it saves the con-

siderable expense of going to the nearest incinerator.

Even if you have only a couple of horses, the stable muck-heap builds inexorably day after day. Many owners seek to reduce its bulk by setting fire to it, the aim being to keep the heap smouldering indefinitely; but the practice has various drawbacks, one being that the smoke, which carries a certain pong, may infuriate neighbours, and another that rain often extinguishes the fire.

Either way, the time eventually comes when drastic action has to be taken - and so it was with us this week. I had already dealt with one side of our double heap by digging barrow-loads into the vegetable patch and mulching the flower-beds; but the other half, composed of insufficiently rotted wood-shavings, simply had to be got rid of.

Luckily our neighbour, John, has a dairy herd, and shifts manure on an heroic, Augean scale. He kindly lent me a tipping trailer, and agreed that a few more tons would make no difference to the monumental pile in the field opposite his farm gate. All I had to do, then, was load up my mite and trundle it down the lane.

A modern tractor would have finished the job in an hour. But my Ford 4600 has a V registration (dating it to 1979 or thereabouts) and ideas of its own about what it will or will not handle. Thus when I plunged the bucket of the fore-loader into the side of the heap, the weight and suction were too great for the hydraulics, and temporary stalemate ensued, with much wheezing and grinding, but zero lift.

Although the heap did not disgorge any decomposing bodies, it did spring a few surprises. One bucketful dumped into the trailer brought clouds of smoke billowing up over the sides, and I realised that my earlier attempts to ignite the heap had been more effective than I had supposed. For weeks a fire had been smouldering down in the depths, and at the first whiff of oxygen a pocket of dry shavings blazed up.

Packed muck is extremely dense and heavy, but when stirred up it expands to a far greater volume. With less than half the heap shifted, the trailer was loaded to the rim, and the tractor's back tyres bulged as I towed it slowly down the lane with maybe three tons aboard. All went well until, on my return, I tried to uncouple the trailer in order to turn the tractor round to fill it again. Somehow the hitch had jammed. Tussle as I might, I could not separate the two vehicles, and the only way I could load the second consignment was by hand. As I sweated, I gloom-

ily tried to work out how many 20-lb shovelfuls would be needed to make up another three tons: then I gave in and rang for help from a local firm of agricultural engineers.

While waiting for the mechanic to arrive, I reflected on other methods of muck disposal. Racehorses, which spend about 23 hours out of every 24 in stables, are often bedded on shredded newspaper, which is admirably absorbent and rots down well. For a journalist, few sights are more salutary than that of yesterday's story, cut into shreds, trampled on by expensive hooves, well splattered and bombed.

When we lived in the Chilterns, the owner of the estate conceived the idea of building a "cowtel" - a huge, American-style milking parlour around which 500 cows lived on concrete, with all their food brought to them. The production of slurry was phenomenal, for every day the concrete was sluiced down with thousands of gallons of water, and the stinking run-off was accommodated in a series of lagoons.

These gradually developed evil-looking brown crusts, with gigantic nettles sprouting from them - and nobody who witnessed it will forget the visit of the Eton College Agricultural Society, whose members came over on a hot summer afternoon to

inspect the revolutionary installation. The president of the society - a boy of about 18 - assured his colleagues that he could safely walk across the surface of the lagoon. Against everyone's advice, he tried it. To no one's surprise, he went through, dropped to his armpits, was recovered with difficulty - and stank so vilely that even after a change of clothes he rendered the coach almost uninhabitable on its return journey.

The mechanic arrived. Within a few seconds he had spotted the cause of my trouble. The hydraulic arms that controlled the trailer hitch had stretched a little under the weight of the first load; by adjusting them, he freed the lock, and I was back in business. He also suggested that I might get better hydraulic performance if I fed the tractor some oil, so we poured a gallon into the rear axle - and, indeed, the whole system became more perky.

A second load cleared the heap. Afterwards the site bore what the police call "signs of a struggle": the grass of the paddock was gouged and churned up where the tractor wheels had dug in, and a trail of fall-out marked my exit route across the yard. Yet I felt liberated by the removal of an eyesore, and by the knowledge that months will pass before the job has to be tackled again.

WEEKEND WALK

In the footsteps of the Fathers

David Viner follows a historic route across the hills of mid-Wales and down through the upper Wye valley

START IN the free car park at Pont Marteg, along the A470 Rhayader to Llangurig road, at the turn signposted to St Harmon. This is the beginning of the Gilfach Farm nature reserve and trail, but go the other way, westwards over the busy road, to cross the Wye by a small, attractive footbridge.

The climb from here is through mature oak woods and a steep pitch up the bank gains access to the lane just before the farm at Nannerth Fawr. By the gate, turn at the bridleway sign and continue to climb up through the trees, looking back over the river valley.

This is a pleasant spot where, if you are lucky, you may spot a red kite. Through the gate, cross the top field towards the skyline, making for the stile. Turn right here and the old track takes you up through the gate on to the higher ground of Coed Nannerth-Fawr.

The view northwards across the valley opens out as you climb and, with it, on Bryn Tithi, the first of several wind farms appears. This ridge walk is the middle part of the 800-year-old "Monks' Trod", a cross-country route between the two 12th-century Cistercian abbeys of Strata Florida and Abbeycwmhir. The 25 miles between them is a superb hill walk in its own right and this section is arguably the best part of it. Monks and other travellers must have passed this way for nearly four centuries.

The walk continues westward along the top of a broad ridge and offers a clear view to the cliff faces of Cerrig Gwalch and - a little further - directly down into the Nannerth valley.

The field patterns that make up the farms repay a detailed study from such a splendid vantage point, assuming a clear day, of course. This done, lift your eyes to the southern horizon and the meandering route of the Wye valley south from Rhayader towards Builth Wells and the Brecon Beacons.

A couple of potentially boggy sections follow as the track crosses upland streams, including a ford at Rhyd Garreg-Iwyd. Before getting this far, do not miss the chance to explore the upland fields and the group of ruined buildings above the waterfall and just below the path. These buildings are accessible even if the waterfall is on private farmland.

Llwyd-pen-rhiw illustrates beautifully the character of the *hafod*, an upland pasture occupied in the summer months when the sheep and cattle were moved to the grazing on the higher ground. The field is enclosed by vertical stone flags in traditional Radnorshire manner and the *hafod* buildings still stand, having apparently fallen into ruins only a few decades ago. Look out for the house, the attached outbuildings and a stone-lined chamber set into the hillside. Look out, too, for the track down to the water's edge - the details are all there for an enquiring eye to decipher.

Beyond the ford, it is an easy walk westwards to join the Aberystwyth mountain

road. Turn left and follow the road for about half a mile, forking left just before the road crests a small ridge. This bridleway steadily descends more than three miles into Rhayader. Views from the track across to the right provide reminders of the historical importance of this area. A Roman fort dating from the first century AD, with its distinguishing playing-card shape - bent, in this case - lies directly across on Esgair Perffydd.

Alongside the track can be seen two wayside markers, one prehistoric and the other early Christian. The first, Maengwynnedd, is a large quartz boulder and marker standing more than three feet high just to the left of the track. After about a mile from the road, look for the second marker, clearly visible on the skyline directly ahead. This is Maen Serth or "Steep Stone", a thin slab of local shale, standing more than seven feet tall, with the remains of a roughly carved cross high up on its south side.

Archaeologists suggest a date between the seventh and ninth centuries for this Christian relic, although it may be much older.

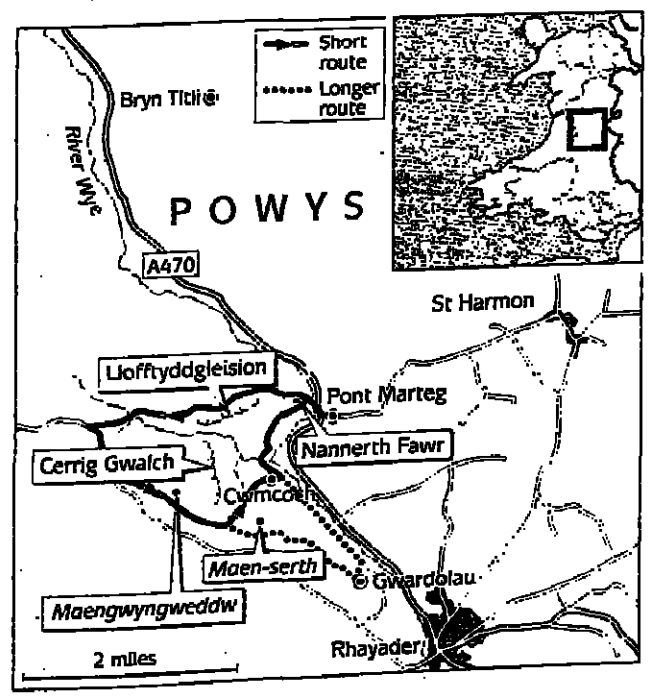
For a longer walk, continue along the track down to Gwardolau Farm, almost into Rhayader. At the lane, turn left and stay on this road, continuing up the valley to rejoin the shorter route's return via Nannerth Fawr. A shorter walk leaves the ridge at Maen Serth, cutting back slightly to head diagonally down the side of the hill into the Nannerth valley and the river Wye. The track is steep but perfectly manageable; take the time to find its route by enjoying a break, and the view, right at the top.

The small farm at Fergwm is below to the left, and the path follows round the hillside, keeping just above the forestry plantation. Above Cwmcoch, take the gate on the left into the trees and follow the Powys County Council footpath signs down the bank to join the lane by the river.

Turn left and ramble along this quiet lane for the mile or so back up to the farm at Nannerth Fawr. Just beyond the farm buildings, retrace your earlier route through the field gates down to the trees on the riverbank and the bridge crossing-point. Just beyond the main road is the car park.

As an optional detour at the end of the walk, the mile or so up the old railway track to Gilfach Farm is well worth the effort. The farm, rescued from impending oblivion in 1988, is a restored 16th-century Welsh longhouse, housing an exhibition on the work of the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust.

The route covers seven miles of generally easy walking, adding on about four miles for the longer route. You will need *Landscape 136* and *Pathfinder 948* maps, plus *969* for the longer route. For more information, contact Rhayader tourist office (01977 810591) or pick up a copy of *Helen Burnham's A Guide to Ancient & Historic Wales: Clwyd & Powys* (HMSO for CADW, 1995).



With its drop-dead good looks, the rhododendron has Snowdonia National Park in its stranglehold

Garden Picture Library

In Snowdonia National Park, ecologists have an uphill struggle to keep down the rhododendron. So far, they are losing the fight. By Daniel Butler

Pretty in pink, but a poisonous enemy

It's a major problem - 1.6 per cent of the park is covered in the stuff and it's getting worse in spite of everything we do to try to keep it under control. It will take £15m to solve the problem - and where are we going to find that?" Dr Rod Gritten, Snowdonia National Park's ecologist, has devoted 20 years to a labour of Sisyphean: fighting the seemingly innocuous rhododendron. Chainsaws, JCBs, herbicide and fire are all part of the armoury - but so far says Gritten, the plant is winning.

It seems that *Rhododendron ponticum* is a Schwarzenegger among plants, a botanical terminator. "Its leaves contain 30 neurotoxins, making it poisonous to virtually every mammal, bird and insect," he says. To add to its potency, it has a co-operative arrangement with a fungus that lives around its roots. Together they produce toxins called allelopathy, which act as natural herbicides to curb competition. Even when the parent plants have been removed, these remain active, helping a fresh wave of rhododendrons by impeding native plants from re-establishing themselves.

Add these to the invader's prodigious quantities of seed, and its ability to regenerate from stumps and cuttings, and you have a serious problem. Some of the worst come when conifer woods are felled. "They just love the acidic soil left by the needles," says Gritten. "When it gets going it swamps everything - we have whole hillsides which have in effect turned into deserts."

Unfortunately, the rhododendron's nasty side is masked by an impressive display of purple flowers, set against a backdrop of dark waxy leaves. These striking looks were particularly popular with Victorian landowners, who planted them for decoration around their houses and as woodland cover for pheasants. This sowed the seed for Snowdonia's current environmental catastrophe.



Rhododendron palustris, part of the vast army invading Snowdonia

"When we surveyed the park in 1986, about 34km² was covered with the stuff," sighs Gritten. "The problem's much worse now, but we're not doing another survey - I'd rather spend all the available funds on control than on an expensive mapping exercise."

Richard Neale can certainly testify to the severity of the problem. As National Trust countryside manager for West Gwynedd, he manages four properties around Beddgelert. Of these, the 1,000-acre Aberglaslyn Estate is probably the worst affected, with 200 - 300 acres completely smothered by the shrubs and the same amount under immediate threat. At the smaller Craffwyn Estate, some 70 acres are "solid rhododendron", with the same again scattered thinly with younger plants. "It's a huge problem; they're everywhere, swamping our heathland and strangling our native woods," says Mr Neale. "In the past 15 years we've spent a quarter of a million

pounds trying to eradicate them, but we're still a long way from success."

The campaign revolves around a three-pronged attack. A four-strong, chainsaw-wielding team tackles them virtually full time, backed by the free labour of thousands of volunteers. Meanwhile, local contractors do the follow-up spraying. "Of course we use weedkillers - we have to be pragmatic," says Neale. "We don't like using chemicals, but the end justifies the means."

Unfortunately, however, the plant's waxy leaves and its unusual way of transporting fluids limit the efficacy of this. "In most plants nutrients are carried around by tiny tubes - the xylem and phloem - which cross-connect," explains Gritten. "This doesn't happen in a rhododendron, so if you put herbicide on the edge of a leaf, you kill only the spot it touches, a thin strip of trunk and a small patch of root." As a result, the most effective answer is to cut down bushes with saws and

winch out as much of the root system as possible, returning two years later to spray every centimetre of regenerating plant with powerful (but biodegradable) herbicides.

In contrast, the RSPB refuses to use chemicals and instead relies on winching out bushes, returning later to pull out regenerating seedlings by hand. "It's a massive job, but we're beginning to see results," says Graham Stringer, assistant warden at the Society's Mawddach Valley Reserve. "We now have a wonderful bank of heather and bilberries where there used to be a 15ft rhododendron - having said that I find it difficult to imagine a time when we've eradicated the threat entirely."

There is still the problem of what to do with the felled foliage, however. As new shrubs can establish themselves from cuttings, prunings need to be disposed of carefully, but burning can be awkward because the leaves contain large amounts of cyanide. At Craffwyn they have

found a partial answer by converting the larger trunks into rustic bridges and garden furniture, while smaller timber is burnt to heat the estate's workshops. All the same, he concedes, this is only the tip of the iceberg. There are other problems.

Incredibly, it seems the rhododendrons have powerful backers who view the spectacular display of flowers in spring and early summer as a major tourist attraction - particularly those at Aberglaslyn Pass. "We try to be sensitive to the wishes of the locals and, although it goes against my feelings as an ecologist, we're going to leave those nearest to the footpaths," says Mr Stringer. "I can see their point; much as I hate the things, it's an amazing sight."

Nor are the problems confined to the rocky, western parts of Britain. "They can be a problem wherever there is acid, relatively well-drained land," says Bill Jenman, nature reserves manager for Sussex Wildlife Trust. "It's particularly bad on heaths and in oak woodlands, but probably the worst areas are the Sussex ghylls." These are small gorges on the High Weald, where little streams cut their way through sandstone rocks. From a botanist's perspective these are fascinating for their cool, damp microclimates, where rare plants such as the Atlantic bryophytes were trapped 6,000 years ago when the last ice age retreated. Unfortunately, rhododendrons now threaten them by blotting out the light.

"At Erridge Rocks, near Tunbridge Wells, we're looking at a bill of £25,000 to clear a couple of acres of sandstone cliff, with another £30,000 to control shrubs across a bigger area," says Mr Jenman. "That's an awful lot of money for us to find." But, while aware of the magnitude of his own problem, he concedes that it pales into insignificance compared with Dr Gritten's difficulties in Snowdonia where, short of a lottery windfall, it looks as though the invader is here to stay.



DUFF HART-DAVIS

Sweet sap for young squirrels

WALK THROUGH any beech wood now, and you will see pieces of freshly peeled bark, four or five inches long, scattered on the path. If you stand still for a few minutes, you may even hear bits falling from the tree canopy, for up there grey squirrels are back at their deadly work of stripping the branches.

In young plantations, they are attacking beech and sycamore saplings just above the roots, particularly trees 10 or 12 years old whose trunks have reached a di-

ameter of three or four inches. For years scientists have struggled to understand this destructive habit, which peaks between May and July.

Some people believe that the squirrels' motives are purely nutritional: at this time of year the sap is rising fast, so that the bark is deliciously sweet. But Dr Robert Kenward, a specialist at the Institute of

Terrestrial Ecology, has a more complex interpretation.

The gnawing, he believes, is triggered by the aggression that fires up juvenile squirrels when they encounter rivals seeking to establish their own territories. His field studies have shown that young squirrels are highly competitive, and that if population density increases - as it

is doing at the moment, after three successive good acorn years - damage becomes severe.

The fact that the trees are sappy after heavy rain makes things still worse. The sweetness of the bark gives the rodents a taste for chewing; having got the habit this summer, they may indulge it all the more furiously next year, with the result that thousands of trees will be killed or maimed for life.

Let lychnis do the hard work

Why do gardeners make things so difficult for themselves when there are so many beautiful plants that are easy to grow?

By Ursula Buchan

I have always tried to keep faith with those plants which I learned to recognise when I first took up gardening, thinking it heartless to abandon them just because my repertoire of known plants has broadened. I cannot deny, however, that familiarity sometimes breeds, if not contempt, then indifference. In this I am obviously not alone, because I rarely seem to read fulsome tributes to, for example, that grand old standby of the cottage flower border, the lychnis.

The fact that lychnis receive so little real acclaim must in part be explained by their amenability. In general, we gardeners seem as bent as Scotland's football team on making things difficult for ourselves. We go to great lengths to nurse tender and miffy plants, while ignoring, or underrating, bone-hardy and thoroughly easy ones.

Border lychnis are related to our own native ragged robin and are in the same family as campions and garden pinks, which is a recommendation in itself. Their finest moment is now, as the days begin slowly to draw in. Best known of them all is the plant known as rose campion, or, more picturesquely, dusty miller: *Lychnis coronaria*, which has deliciously tactile, furry basal leaves and soon high, branching, grey-silver stems, from the ends of which emerge single, rounded flowers. The flower's colour puts the "m" into magenta, but miraculously escapes being garish because of the mitigating effect of the silvery leaves.

That said, I do prefer the white form, 'Alba', because the combination of pale ivory flowers and grey leaves is a particularly winning one.



'Lychnis chalcedonica', a solid, old-fashioned herbaceous perennial, has intriguingly notched flowers in the shape of its common name - Maltese cross

John Glover/GPL

There is also a variety called 'Oculata', which has white flowers, with rather sweet pink eyes. There are a number of 'Oculata' seed strains on the market. Thompson and Morgan, for example, sell a charming selection of harmonious pinks, purples and whites, called 'Dancing Ladies Mixed'. The sparse stems lend the plant an airy quality, which means that they can be placed nearer to the front of a border.

More refined than the rose campion (which I grant can look a little coarse) is *Lychnis flos-jovis*. The so-called flower of Jove, especially the cultivar known as 'Hort's Variety', has a clean rose-pink flower rather than purplish-red. There is also a

white form. Like *L. coronaria*, *L. flos-jovis* has tufts of grey leaves, but it grows only to 12 to 18 in tall, so does well as a border edging, and associates well with herbaceous geraniums, old roses and blue-flowered hardy salvia.

Lychnis chalcedonica is a rather different, tall-growing (3ft), but more solid, old-fashioned herbaceous perennial, which has fresh green leaves, dense, domed heads of bright vermilion and single, intriguingly notched flowers. Their shape gives point to the common name of Maltese cross. This plant adds a definite zing to the border in July, especially if planted in groups near the purple-leaved shrub *Berberis thunbergii*, purple

orach, bronze-leaved dahlias, or the yellow-orange flowers of *Anthemis sancti-johannis*. The fact that this plant self-seeds makes it a useful choice for a colourful flower meadow.

A hybrid from *L. chalcedonica*, called *L. x artanortensis*, 'Vesuvius' has brownish-purple leaves of its own, to combine with the scintillating, deep orange-scarlet flowers. Planted en masse, it is a very striking plant, even though only 18 in tall, and likely to appeal to anyone who easily tires of pastel summer borders. *L. x haageana* will make much the same effect and, if the seed is sown early, will flower in the first year, so can generally be treated as an annual. In any case, both are rather

short-lived as perennials, so will need replacing by seed or division from time to time.

Some lychnis have sticky stems, hence the common name of catchfly. This stickiness is very obvious in the German catchfly, a plant which has in the past lured like a drunk between lychnis and viscacia, but seems to have taken the cure and settled down, for the time being, as *Lychnis viscacia*. This plant is virtually hairless, having dark green, lance-shaped, basal leaves, from which arise 18 in wiry flower stems. The most striking form is the double one, 'Splendens Plena', which has really bright pink flowers.

Lychnis are easy to grow, pro-

vided that they are in sun. The Maltese cross and its close relations like a reasonably fertile and moist soil, but *L. coronaria* and *L. flos-jovis* positively prefer a poor and dry soil, which smartens up the silvery fur on the leaves and stems. It makes sense to cut off the dead heads of woolly species after flowering, otherwise, these plants have a tendency to flower and seed themselves to death.

Eventually, the stems get so woody and brittle that it is kinder to let the plants seed and replace themselves. I have never found that they do so prolifically enough to be a nuisance. *Lychnis coronaria* 'Alba' comes true from seed, provided

that you can keep it quarantined from the other colour forms.

Propagation is straightforward, which is just as well, as generally these plants are comparatively short-lived: the seed germinates readily in spring, or the rosettes can be divided, which is made easy by their fibrous root systems.

In wet seasons, slugs can pose problems, particularly for the Maltese cross and its close relations. But the furry leaves of the rose campion repel even a mollusc's repulsively rasping tongue.

It does, however, fall victim to powdery mildew late on in the season, by which time no one could mind too much.

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صكنا من الالاحل

Don't take pot luck with your maple

Transplanting a garden tree can be tricky and it may not be worth the extra work, writes Anna Pavord

"We have a Japanese maple which we planted underneath a bay window at the front of our house. It is on a corner of the bed and has now spread out so far from its original position that we have to jump over it to get to the front door. We'd like to move it to a different position, but obviously do not want to kill the tree in the process. What are our chances of transplanting it successfully?"

Briony and Richard Williams moved into their Edwardian house in Worcester when they were first married and the maple in question, one of the finely cut types in the *Acer palmatum* dissectum group, was a housewarming present from Briony's mother. Typically, it had grown much wider than it was high. Though it was not getting in the way of the view from the sitting-room window, it was creeping steadily out from its corner, blocking the path to the front door and another path leading through to the back garden. Some of the farthest branches had the moth-eaten, weary look that comes from more human contact than is good for a tree.

Certainly, it would be possible to move it. The maple will probably have three or four major roots, as thick as its branches, which anchor the tree into the ground. These will spread at least as far as the canopy on top and will be connected by a mass of smaller, fibrous roots which are the food and water gatherers. While you can prune back the long, anchor roots to make replanting easier, you need to keep the fibrous rootball intact if you can. Though it does not look it, it is more important than the anchors.

Like roses, fancy Japanese maples are often grafted on to borrowed roots, to give them extra vigour. This has helped the maple grow well (it is about 6ft wide, though only about 2ft tall) but will not make transplanting easy. The root system will be big and tough, and fighting all the way. The fact that the roots will have spread under the two paths will also complicate matters.

The maple is deciduous, so if Briony decides to go ahead with her plan, she should wait until after Guy Fawkes' night. Traditionally, this marks the start of the lifting season in proper nurseries, where trees and shrubs are grown in the open ground rather than in containers. She will need a sharp spade to dig a circle about 18in away from the main stem of the maple and a sharp saw to cut cleanly through some of the major roots.

The maple is too low to be much affected by the weather, but in more exposed situations you often find that a tree's major anchoring root is the one set against the prevailing wind. A crowbar, which you can jiggle down at an angle between the biggest roots, is the best tool for loosening their grip and easing the tree out of the ground. If you use a spade or a fork for this part of the manoeuvre, you are likely to snap the handle.

When the rootball is free, ease the whole tree over on its side, so that you can slip a hessian sack or some plastic sheeting into the hole under the rootball. Rock the tree back on to the sheet, draw it up round the rootball and tie the corners of the sheet round the stem. This makes the tree easier to carry and keeps some of the vital small roots in close, feeding, contact with the earth round them.

For reasons of space, Briony has chosen to replant the maple in a pot. She found one in IKEA in Birmingham, a £35 bargain, about 3ft 6in across and glazed in a pleasing bluish-green colour. The size of the pot would dictate the size of the rootball to be replanted. If the tree had been going back into a hole in the ground, Briony could have been more generous with the amount of anchor root she left intact.

A maple will live perfectly happily in a pot. But I would have reservations about replanting a tree of that size into a pot, especially as its roots will have been substantially reduced. As it had originally been planted close to the house, its branches grew mostly in one direction. I would trace some of the longest branches back to a junction and prune them away, so that the head of the tree would be



Leaving the maple where it is will keep it happy - and strengthen its defence against passing children

John Lawrence

balanced and reduced in size at the same time.

Once in a pot, growth will be slower than in the open ground, so the maple is not likely to outgrow its situation again. The pot will need to be well "croaked" with pebbles or broken shards of pottery. It already has plenty of drainage holes in the bottom. I would use a strong loam compost such as John Innes No 3, rather than a soilless, multi-purpose compost. It will give firmer support to the transplanted roots. It also retains food and water better than soilless composts.

A layer of compost at the bottom of the pot will provide a bed for the roots. As the tree must be planted at the same depth as it was in its previous position, Briony will have to work out just how deep the bottom layer of compost needs to be. If the rootball is wrapped in a sheet of plastic, the tree can be eased into the pot without any further damage. When it is in place, the sheet should be untied and gently pulled out from under the roots. Then Briony can tuck more compost round the sides of the rootball.

The tree will need to be well

watered, particularly during its first spring and summer, when the leaves will be demanding full service from the roots, despite the traumas they have been through. Each spring, before the maple comes into leaf, Briony could scrape away the top couple of inches of compost and replace it with a fresh layer. I would also use a slow-release granular fertiliser, or a liquid fertiliser watered in every two weeks during the summer.

Japanese maples of the *Acer palmatum* dissectum kind are chiefly grown for the beauty of their

leaves which are deeply cut into fine, fluttering fingers. To give pleasure, the foliage must be immaculate: no windburn, no sunburn, no shrivelling from drought or bashing from passing bicycles (Briony has three young sons). They are tolerant of shade, but do best in an open position, sheltered from the north and east. They hate late spring frosts, which cut back the new growth. Plants in pots can be protected from these to some extent by a wrap of spun fleece.

So the answer to Briony Williams's question is that it is

perfectly possible to shift the maple. The real question is whether such a move is desirable. If it were mine, I'd leave it where it is. If she moves it, she'll have to prune it, to compensate for the loss of root and to reduce the canopy to a size compatible with its pot. Why not just prune the thing and leave it where it is? It is not fast growing and, with her careful eye, and a feel for the maple's natural habit, nobody need ever know she has been nibbling at it. And the postman won't have to buy a pogo stick to get to the front door.

WEEKEND WORK

- Cut back early flowering herbaceous plants such as the oriental poppy. You can be as vicious as you like with this. Surrounding plants will then have more room for manoeuvre. The perennial cornflower, *Centaurea montana*, can also be cut back hard. It will produce fresh foliage and another crop of flowers later in the season.
- Clip over *aubrietias* and *saxifrages* to remove dead flowers and some of the straggly growth of *aubrietia*. If bright yellow flowers on your *senecio* are going to ruin a colour scheme, get rid of them now.
- Keep a watch on populations of aphids. Some infestations, as on the tops of broad bean plants, can easily be dealt with. Snap off the tops, together with the blackfly, and bin them. Greenfly on honeysuckle and roses may need to be sprayed.
- Evergreen *ceanothus* can be pruned now, if it is growing too far out from the wall. Cut back flowering sprays to within a few buds of the main branch. Tie in new growths as flat as you can against the wall. Growth springing direct from the front of the trunk (called, for obvious reasons, breastwood) may have to be dispensed with altogether.
- Spring-flowering *chaenomeles* may also need attention where it is trained against a wall. Tie in some new growths to build up the

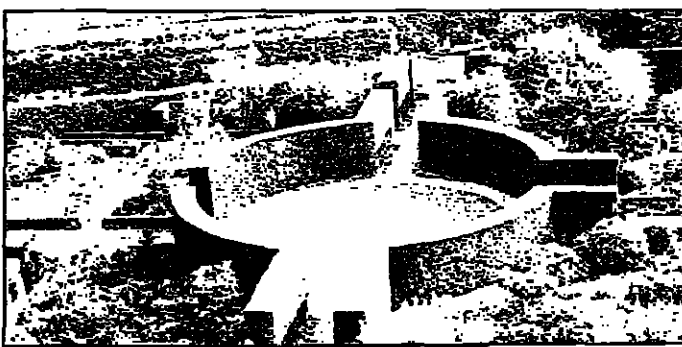
framework, and cut back other lateral twiggy growths to five or six buds.

- Gather herbs such as rosemary and thyme and hang them to dry in a cool, airy place.
- Train and tie in the growths of fan, espalier or cordon fruit trees planted against wires or walls, or to make a tunnel over a path. Once the main framework of the trained tree is in place, summer pruning is easy. You just cut back new growth to within a few leaves of its starting-point.
- Keep picking sweet peas, which will soon stop flowering if they are allowed to run to seed.



Roses may need protection

CUTTINGS



Sissinghurst, Vita Sackville West's pride and joy

In Your Garden Again by Vita Sackville-West (Oxwood Press, £14.99) is a reprint of a reprint, a collection of VSW's famous Observer columns, gathered together for a book in 1953 and now available again. "I set out modestly," writes Miss Sackville-West with uncharacteristic humility, "with the idea of giving some suggestions to the amateur gardener about unusual plants he might grow... I have tried to cater for all tastes, for the small garden and the not so small, bearing in mind that costs and facilities are no longer what they used to be." She wrote that 45 years ago. What would she think of "facilities" now? I don't find her as engaging (or as useful) a writer as her near contemporary Reginald Farrer, but Sissinghurst fever still runs high. Who treks to the shrine of the Yorkshire

Dalesman Farrer? Farrer recommended old boots, pig trough garbage and "the blood of kings" as the best diet for *Gentiana acaulis*. Sackville-West, the great romantic, suggests mortar rubble and a top dressing of bone meal.

Two summer courses for children have been laid on at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh. The first (Monday 20 - Friday 24 July) focuses on paper making, kite making and printing. The second (Monday 27 - Friday 31 July) centres on Batik and designing animal sculptures. Both cost £75 and booking is essential. Grown ups can sign on for an Introduction to Botanical Art (Monday 3 - Friday 7 August 1998) aimed specially at beginners. For more details on all courses call 0131 248 2841.

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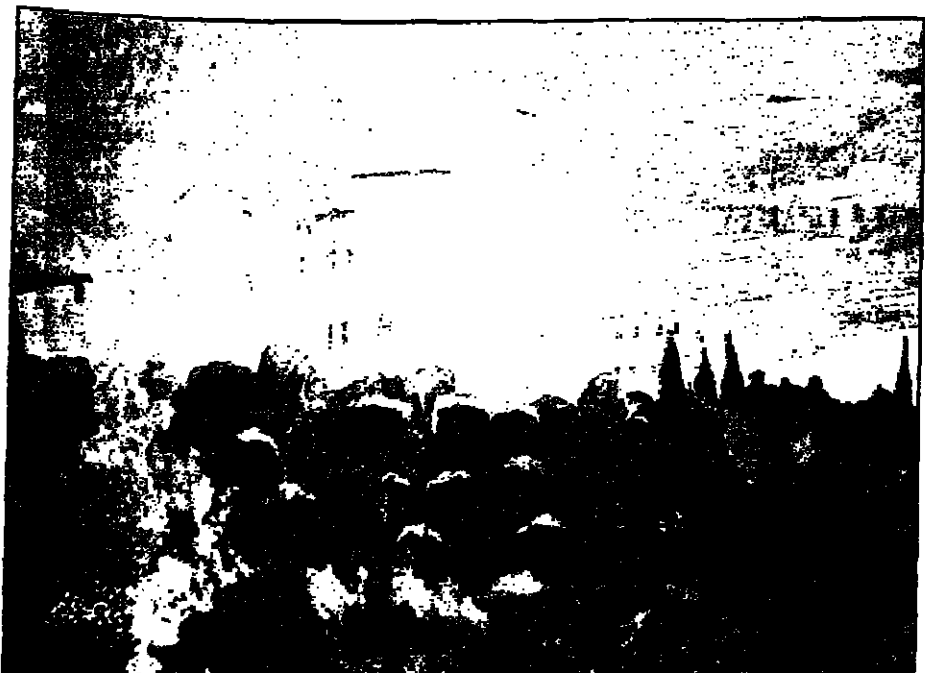
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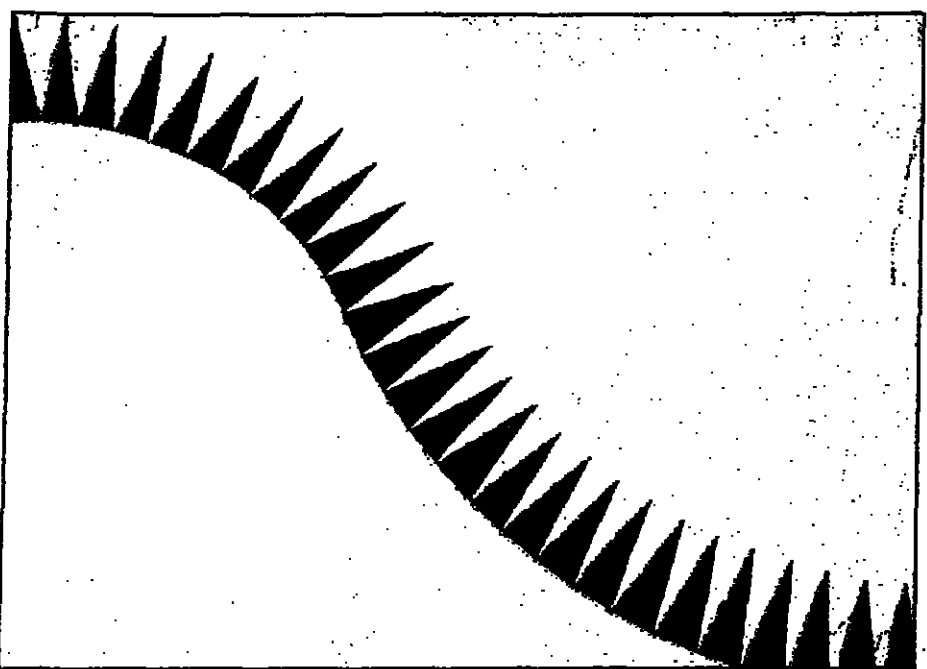
The duvet's not a patch on these

Quilting is an ancient tradition, frozen out by central heating. But quilts are enjoying a renaissance.

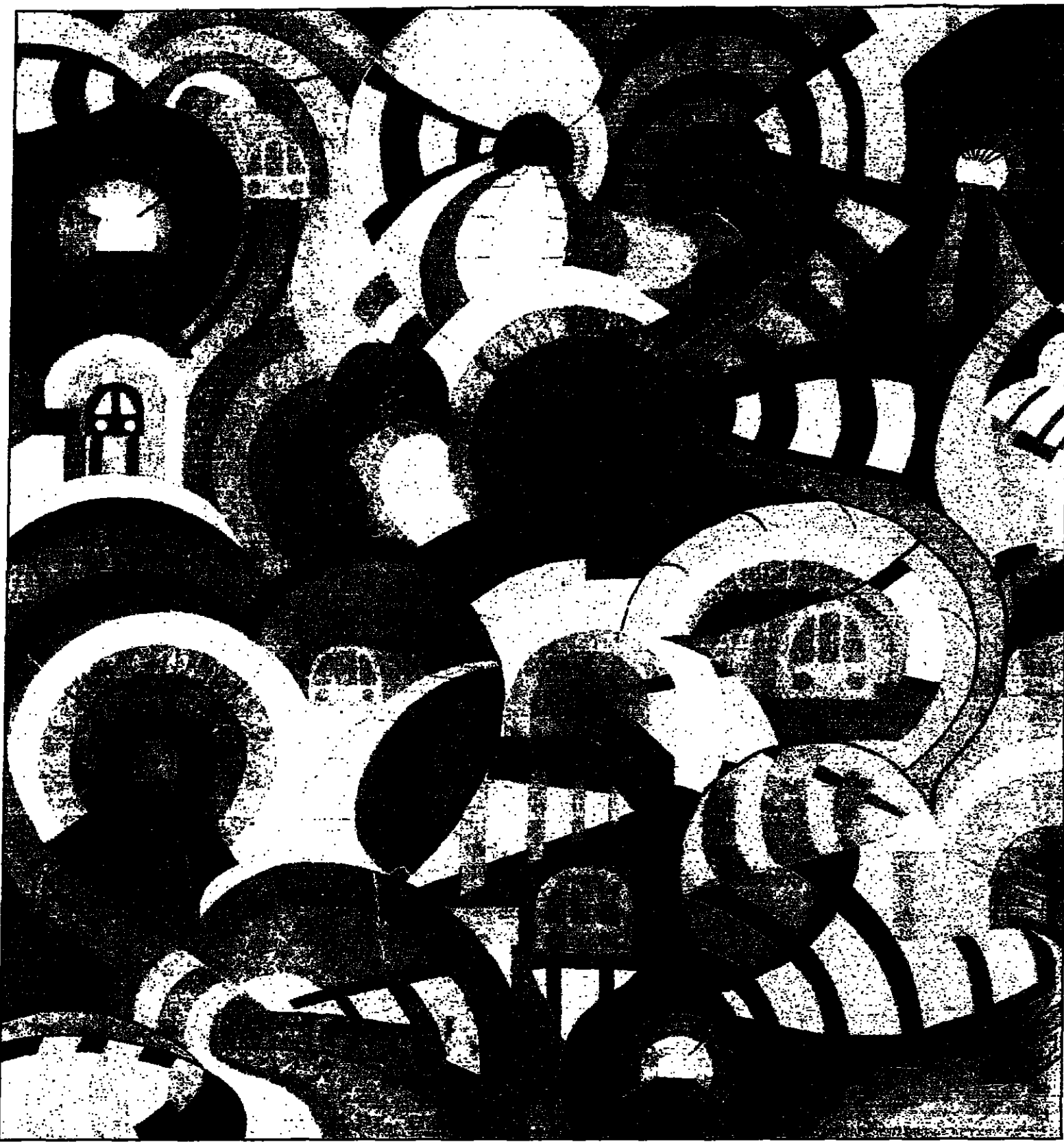
By Charlotte Packer



Perusia Skyline by Anna Maria Brenti



Solstice by Barbara Barber



To the Heart of the City by Hilary Robinson, entry no. 473 in the National Patchwork Championships

THIS WEEK IN THE SEVEN-SECTION

INDEPENDENT

ON SUNDAY



Simply Red

'Every time those ghastly little spin doctors leak against me, it builds my rating ... my career has been revived in its entirety by the Blairites'

Cole Moreton meets Ken Livingstone, the man New Labour loves to hate

Across the country, individual quilt-makers and quilt groups are gearing up for the biggest event on their calendar: Quilts at Olympia, which is both an enthusiasts' fair and the battleground of the National Patchwork Championships.

Stifle that yawn and forget about hexagonal Laura Ashley off-cuts; the quilt, patchwork or embroidered, has a long history and only a small part of this is about recycling clashing scraps of fabric, as this exhibition will prove.

At its most basic, quilting is simply the act of stitching some form of wadding between two layers of fabric to create an insulating panel, for use as a blanket or shawl.

Until early this century, quilt-making was common to almost all cultures and, in most communities, it soon be-

came more than just a practical way of guarding against the cold. Quilts were time-consuming to make, so women would team up with their friends not only to speed the task along, but to make it more enjoyable. Getting together to make a quilt was probably the precursor of the coffee morning, perhaps even of the Tupperware party. In Britain, central heating and the duvet put paid to such occasions; in America, in spite of these advances, quilts and quilting have remained enormously popular.

The revival of interest in the UK can be traced back to an exhibition of American quilts at the Commonwealth Institute in 1976, which was staged to coincide with celebrations of the 200th anniversary of American Independence. The exhibition raised awareness of the quilting tradition and the number

of British enthusiasts has been rising steadily ever since.

This year more than 20,000 people are expected to visit Quilts at Olympia, the highlight of which is the extraordinary Peace Quilt, which makes its final appearance outside South Africa at Olympia, before returning to its permanent home in Durban.

This giant quilt comprises 779 panels, each of which depicts its maker's interpretation of peace. They are sewn on to 26 large panels in a brickwork formation, and these in turn have been stitched together to form a "wall". The project began in 1993 when a group of South African quilt-makers hit upon the idea of asking fellow quilters from around the world to contribute panels as a demonstration of world commitment to peace in the spirit of "Masakhane", which means "Let us build together". The re-

sponse was overwhelming. Panels, which soon became known as "bricks", flooded in and bit by bit the wall of peace was constructed.

As well as the Peace Quilt and the entries to the National Patchwork Championships, visitors will be able to view works by contestants in three small competitive exhibitions dedicated to textile arts, creative embroidery and wearable art accessories. And, once inspired by all this creativity, you can meet some of the makers, and splurge on the latest fabrics and sewing machines on show at the 100 or so stalls, and get quilting.

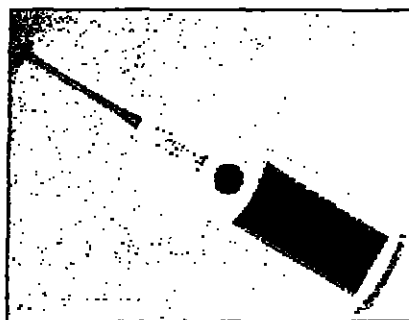
Quilts at Olympia (01603 812259 for tickets) runs from 9 to 12 July. Open on Thursday and Friday, 10am-7pm, and on Saturday and Sunday, 10am-5pm. Tickets: £6 for adults, £5 for OAPs, £3 for children

GOOD THING



Dispense with the bother of a photograph album and instead make your friends envious by using this fan photo holder to display photos and mementoes from each time you go away. Fan photo holder, £14.95, House (01258 452880 for mail order).

MAD THING



From mid-July you will be able to enjoy guilt-free coffee with a solar-powered milk frother from Whitard of Chelsea (0800 525 092 for store details). It comes in green, yellow or white and costs £30.

SHOP TALK

Wigmore Sports Ltd,
81-83 Wigmore Street,
London, W1H 9PA
(0171 486 7761)

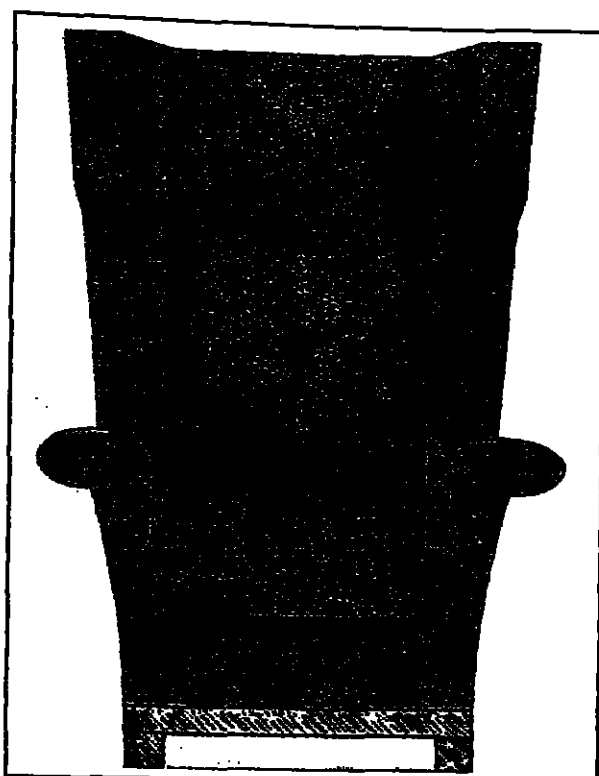
IF WATCHING Wimbledon has inspired you to head onto a tennis court, make sure you are properly prepared for a game by paying a visit to Wigmore Sports, which claims to have the largest display of racquets in Europe. Transform yourself into a Henman with the latest racquet from Head, the TLS6 (shown here), and pay £200 for the privilege of serving with what the manufacturers claim is "the lightest, most powerful racquet in the world". If this seems a bit costly, take advantage of the "try before you buy" scheme for racquets of more than £100. Another good thing about this shop is that, if you do become a merciless star on the court, there is a 24-hour return re-stringing service available.

TIM STEIN

هكذا من الراحل

Making the very best of both worlds

SVL design modern furniture, using traditional methods, which is unique, classy and costly. By Rhiannon Batten



Hand-stitching gives an almost sculptural look

SVL is a furniture design studio with a back-to-the-future tendencies. The people behind it, Stefan Von Linsheim, Marino Fantig and Melissa Debbs, wholeheartedly believe that good traditional skills teamed with modern design are the keys to the longevity and comfort of furniture.

Initially the pieces look very modern. Poking out from the studio wall at various heights are the company's products - miniature versions of sprawling day-beds and chairs with their insides scooped out like the eggs they were designed to resemble. The full-size versions are just as arresting to look at. The "spring" chairs stand up perfectly straight with elegant rigid backs emerging out of plump scarlet cushions. However, beneath the cushions, the tell-tale SVL coil springs sit bare and exposed, revealing the traditional construction underlying such exotic designs.

Having studied traditional upholstery and working as a furniture restorer in Germany, Stefan was finding little challenge in his work. He started designing his own furniture by blending traditional skills with modern designs.

Once the designs have been drawn up, Stefan and his team send their designs to a craftsman to have the frames built up in beech or ash - or even sometimes incorporating bamboo caning or materials such as chrome. Once the frames are built, they are first webbed and then the springs are sewn onto them and tied down, all by hand. Next the hair, or fibre padding, is stitched into shape and, because the whole process is carried out by hand, the thickness can vary to give an almost sculptural element to the piece.

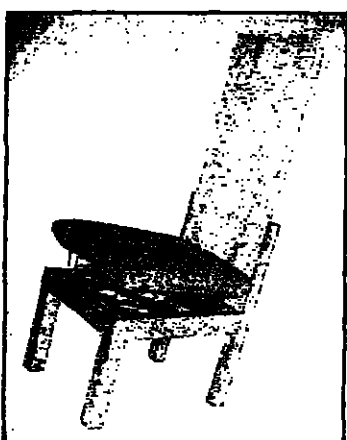
Stefan began exposing the underlying construction in some of the designs, to showcase the work and skill going into them and to illustrate the development of furniture in contemporary designs. In May this year he also held an open workshop to show his pieces of furniture at different stages of production so that

people were not just seeing the finished product with all the work inside them covered up.

The number of hours that go into producing these pieces is immense. It is this attention to detail, as well as the quality of the raw materials, which dictates the hefty price tags.

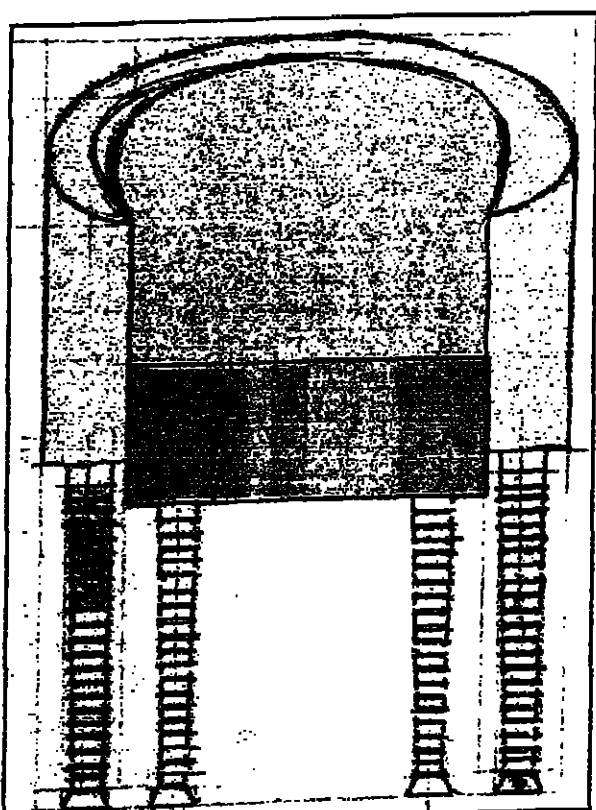
One SVL customer, a city banker, felt that the price was worth it simply because he had become so frustrated with the furniture he found in high street shops. He turned to SVL because he liked the way that the pieces they produce are custom-made which makes them more enduring, and superior to the usual fall-apart-after-a-few-years furniture.

There is no question that the SVL designs are quality products - but not a cheap option. The SVL tub chair costs £1,300, the armchair £2,400 and the prototype spring chair £1,000. Because of the prices, the company works on private commissions. But this is the sort of furniture that will improve with age and £1,000 for a piece of interactive sculpture is maybe not such a high price to pay.

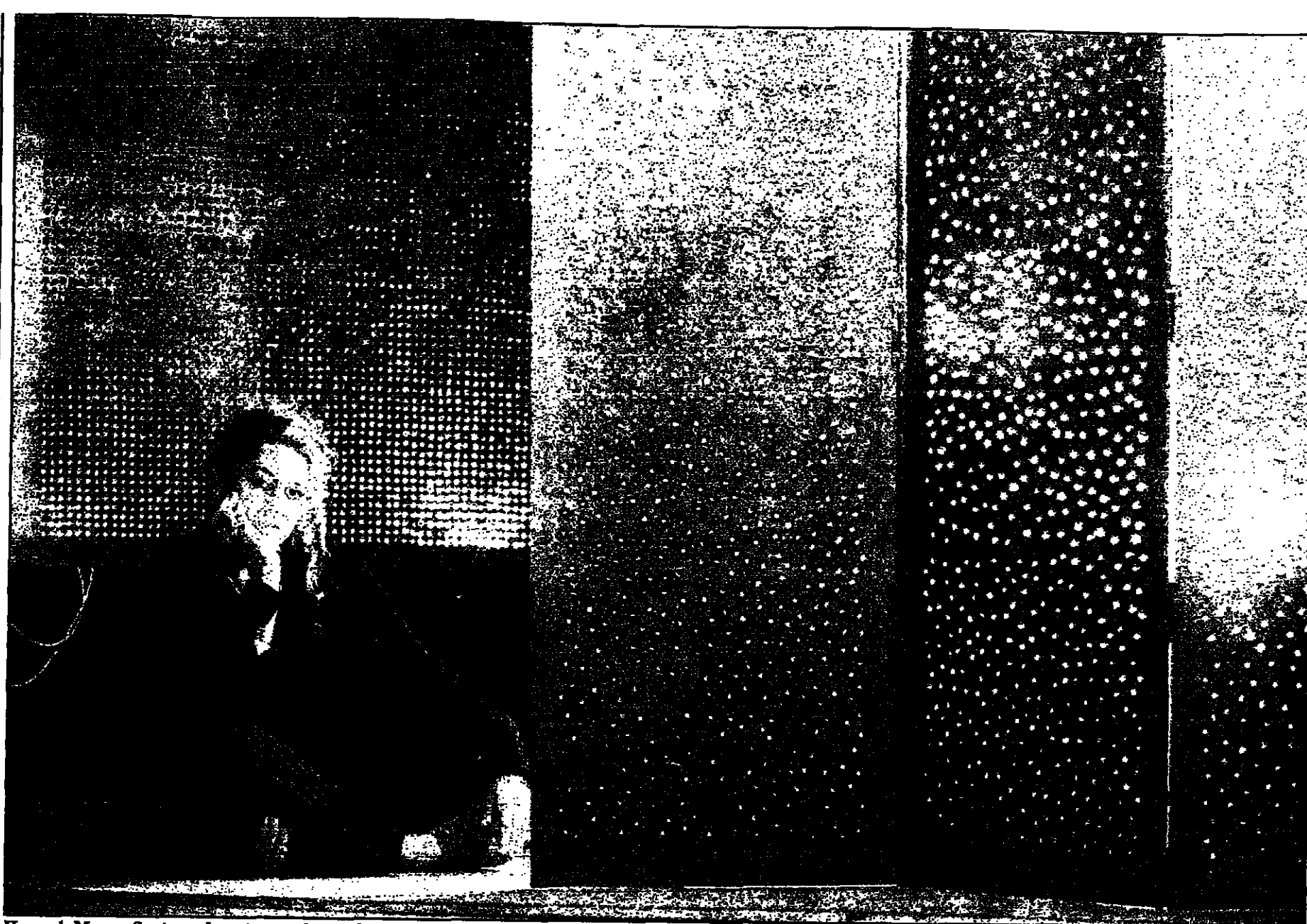


The spring chair shows the detail of the construction

SVL is at Cole Street Studios, 6/8 Cole Street, London, SE1 4HY (0171 403 4311)



The tub chair has comfort and durability



Hannah Mae reflects on how to convince a local authority to commission a large structure for a public space

The secret of light - it's in the perforations

Hannah Mae is many things: sculptor, lighting designer, metalworker, etcher. It just depends on how you, the viewer, choose to interpret her work, and which piece you are looking at. When pushed, she describes her metal and resin creations as "light-enhancing metalwork". And later, after much thought, suggests that really she is an artist whose chosen medium is light: "I am interested in light, but not in a functional sense. I try to harness natural light, and when I do use light bulbs it's not to illuminate a room." And it's true, you would not want to read by the light cast by Hannah Mae's creations.

Her works glow enigmatically, menacingly or prettily, depending on your response to them. To some, a tall convex wall light with regular, slightly squared-off perforations is reminiscent of a tower block at night, its tiny windows lit with a thousand green lights. For others it is an abstract arrangement of glowing spaces.

Hannah Mae clearly takes pleasure in the diverse reactions her works provoke, and although she gives them names, she's careful to keep these as ambiguous as possible so as not to encroach on individual experiences. One visitor, a musician, declared her light creations to be his compositions made visible, and a woman fell in love with a simple screen with row upon row of tiny glowing pinholes because it reminded her of flying across the city at night.

The most conventional pieces are wall-mounted boxes with perforated metal panels through which beams of light are cast from a concealed bulb, but her earliest works were screens designed to limit light. "I hate bare bulbs and harsh light," she explains, but I've never really liked curtains or blinds, because they

A tower block at night; the city from an aeroplane; Hannah Mae's designs are light-enhancing creations.
By Charlotte Packer

block out the light. My ideas stem from that moment when you wake in the morning and you see a tiny spot of light on the ceiling or wall, even though the curtains are closed, but can't quite work out where it comes from. That always really pleased me."

Her first pieces, begun while still at Camberwell, were attempts to recapture that early morning experience. Hannah Mae hung screens from simple tracks which, when pulled across a window, would filter light through scattered punctures; and when drawn back would be wall hangings. To work effectively while not back-lit, she introduced colour and surface design to the panels by etching shapes and textures on to the metal, and applying translucent resin to the perforations. It is hard to work out how she manages to secure the tiny discs of colour so that they adhere to the metal while remaining flush with the surface on both sides of her screens.



Light holes swirling like sparks from a Catherine wheel

"People always ask how I do it but I won't tell anyone how I apply the resin," she says. "It's a closely guarded secret."

Although she only completed her degree last June, she has come a

long way from her first flat sheet of perforated metal, and the doubts that beset her on a postgraduation trip around America and Mexico. Many of her current works relate directly to her American travels. The

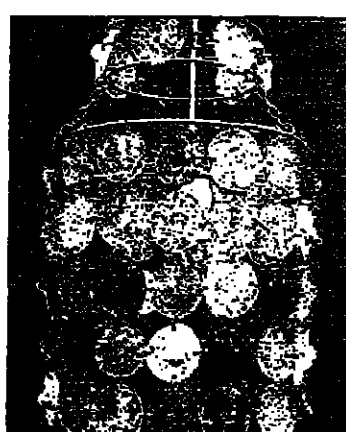
first of a new series of large light-enhancing room dividers is, she says, the colour of autumn in the Catskill Mountains; while a small window screen with light holes swirling like sparks from a Catherine wheel was based on her experience of nearly drowning while swimming in Mexico.

"I spent a lot of that trip wondering whether or not to pursue my design work or whether to jack it in and work my way up as a buyer somewhere like Liberty. But in the end I realised that I'd regret it forever if I didn't give it a go." She returned in January this year, sufficiently inspired by her experiences, both good and bad, to commit to a studio, invest in a giant acid bath, chemical suit, gas mask and goggles in readiness for etching the larger pieces she'd begun to think about. "It's great fun! Although there are times when I come home feeling like a bloke," she jokes, referring to days spent refining hinge designs and welding techniques for her room dividers.

Since then, Hannah Mae has organised her own show as part of Camberwell Arts Week, taken on a few private commissions, and just secured a second show, which opens next week at Coombes Contemporary. But far from basking in this sudden success, she is wondering how she will convince a local authority to commission a large, light-enhancing structure for a public space. "I think one of my pieces would look great outside in a park or playground, perhaps."

Hannah Mae's convex wall lights cost £390, small square wall lights are £110, large dividing screens cost from £1,900, and window blinds cost from £300. All are available to order (0961 403640). You can also see Hannah Mae's work at Coombes Contemporary (0171 403 6866), Tower Bridge Plaza, 1 Copper Row, SE1 from 8 July.

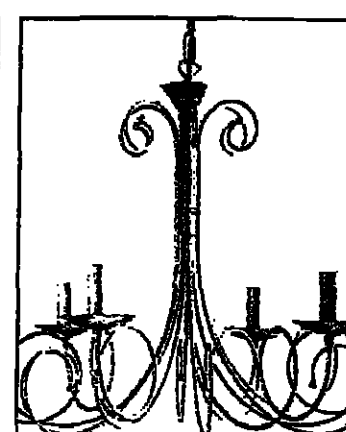
LIGHT UP YOUR LIFE



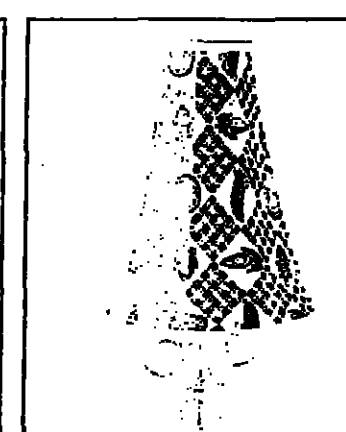
Small nipple pendant, £109, by Carole Smith (0171 737 8230). Also available from Out of the Earth at 83 Church Road, Barnes (0181 563 9991)



Sirius Mushroom Lamps, £59, SKK Lighting (0171 434 1095)



Adlington 6 Light, £160, BHS (0171 262 3288)



'Fruit and Veg' lampshade, £45, and stand, £40, from Chandeliers for the People (0171 792 1516)



BOR 3 track spotlight in polished aluminium, £40, IKEA (0181 208 5607 for nearest store)

Dressed up to the Nineties

The way we shop may have changed, but the art of dressing still comes down to good sense.

By Louise Levene

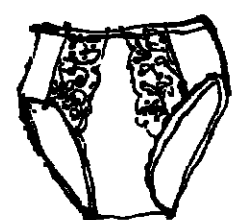
How difficult can it be? You walk into a department store. You check out the becoming new fashions, spend an hour or so in various fitting rooms, then leave the store accompanied by sundry parcels and hatboxes prior to an excitable trying-on session at home.

Schoolgirl error. This is not how the other half shop. The serious store card holder doesn't get out of bed until she gets the big call with the news that "the new Jil Sander things are in" or "We have the Joseph jeans in your size". That call will come from her personal shopper.

This happy band of retail therapists is on the increase and the self-styled doyenne of the American fitting room is Betty Halbreich of Bergdorf Goodman, who has published a book to give us all the benefit of her grandmotherly sartorial wisdom.

Betty who? Betty Halbreich, who for the last 200 years or so has been personal shopper to the grandes dames of Fifth Avenue and 57th. Ostensibly this is a time-saving exercise. Our busy lives supposedly make normal consumer behaviour impossible, so we need Bettys to do a recce of the designer floor and gather a pile of must-haves for us to try on. One suspects that for every busy Wall Street broker Betty makes over, there are a dozen social X-rays whose size 4 physiques make it impossible for them to cover the distance from mixed separates to the changing room without an oxygen tent. It probably all began with the hyper-famous and the super-rich who were simply too grand to cruise the rails in the normal way. And what was good enough for Jackie O was good enough for Jane Doe. Now even Marks and Spencer have joined in.

Anyone who knows the business will tell you that this is all reinventing the wheel. Once upon a time fashion retailing had a rigid career structure. You started in the stockroom making tea and doing deliveries, you graduated to junior sales (cleaning mirrors) and you finally became a sales lady or maybe even a buyer. The graduates of this system knew the stock, knew their customers and had been trained in the expert fitting of clothes. Such sales ladies do still exist, mostly in the so-called Madam shops and the more



LOUISE'S FASHION TIPS

1. Never shop with other people - they get bored and tell lies.
2. Don't drink and shop - it will all have to go back.
3. Don't buy an Hermès scarf. It will probably age you five years and can look very untidy. In the Seventies people simply tied them to their handbags.
4. If you suspect that your knickers might be showing, take them off. If they are designer knickers, consider tying them to your handbag.
5. Don't wear a lilac linen suit to your next wedding unless you plan to form a backing group with the six other women doing the same.
6. Don't wear leggings. They look awful.
7. Keen fashion hounds should resign themselves to starting their winter shopping the instant the sales finish at the end of July. The ultra-nice stuff and the extreme sizes can disappear in hours. Those on a tight budget could consider postponing their first big shop until late September, by which time they won't find anything they really like and will save a fortune.

up-market department stores. Elsewhere you are more likely to meet with the "That acid lemon looks fantastic on you, madam" or (worse still) the "If it's not there, we haven't got it" schools of retailing.

Shoppers lost the plot when the old style, self-explanatory departments - coats, dresses, separates, knitwear etc. - were wiped off the map by the cult of the Designer in the late Seventies. Want a black skirt? It could be anywhere.

Christina Abbott, queen of personal shopping at the London branch of Harvey Nichols, is the first to admit that personal service used to be the norm. She has served 18 years in the rag trade and finds her current role infinitely more satisfying than the shop floor: she gets to know the customer, everyone gets a cup of tea and she pretty well always makes a sale. "I love it. It's the ultimate one to one. You can build up good relationships with shop-floor clients but personal shopping is the ultimate. You can go the extra five yards." Her zeal is rather terrifying but there's a big demand and the service is free even if the clothes aren't.

Meanwhile, back at Bergdorf's, every member of the sales staff keeps a client list noting the customer's age, size, colour preferences, blood group and (most important) phone number. Over on Madison Avenue, the Prada sales ladies are so hands-on that customers phone them at home for advice on what to wear in the morning. The *New Yorker* recently devoted eight pages to Prada's Victoria Gallegos, which is pretty good going for a girl who works in a shop.

La Halbreich, who has been holding court at Bergdorf's since 1975, has a client list that reads like an Oscar-night party. We know this because she got them all to write little encomia on her winning ways with wardrobes, which are dotted embarrassingly through the text. Interestingly, these are seldom by anybody you'd care to emulate. Joan Rivers? I don't think so.

The book itself is perfectly sound as far as it goes. The combination of Halbreich's status as 5th Avenue style guru and her advancing years lends weight to her often risibly banal pronouncements. You can't argue with the idea that narrow, black, side-zipped trousers are slumming but that isn't wisdom, it's just obvious.



According to gurus, the basic rules of grooming are the same now as they were in the Fifties

Hulton Getty

But banality need be no impediment to the bestseller list. Tell people what they already know with enough style and authority and the manual will walk out of the shop. There have been many such books and although styles may change the advice tends to boil down to three things that are as old as Lillie Langtry:

1. A modular wardrobe based on one dark colour (usually black or navy) with (often cheaper) bits of colour added on.
 2. Good grooming.
 3. Expensive-looking accessories.
- One of the biggest hits in recent memory was John Molloy's 1977 *Dress for Success*. Molloy, having established that women who moved up the career ladder wore a uniform of skirted suit and blouse, then refined his formula by establishing what colour the blouse ought to be. Ge-

nius. His extensive research consisted of showing snaps of well-groomed young women in various jackets and shirts and asking people to grade their charms and abilities. A yellow blouse conveyed honesty, purple blouses were a no-no (unless you wanted a job with scientists who were kinky for it). No blouse at all usually guaranteed a second interview.

The whole colour thing was further complicated in 1983 by Mary Spillane, the *Colour Me Beautiful* woman. One of a sudden hitherto sane women were sat about draped in swathes of peach and watermelon waiting to be diagnosed as "warm winter" or "wet weekend in August".

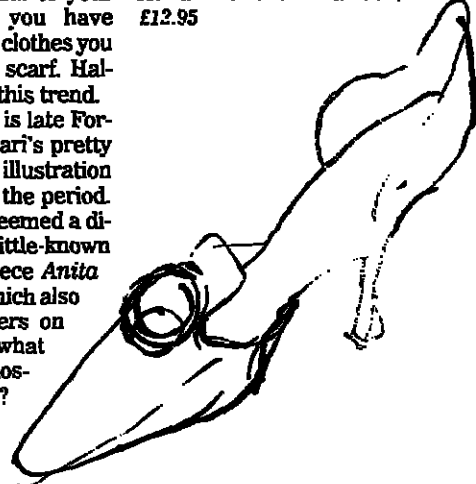
Where Halbreich scores, however, is in the design of the book itself. Recent wardrobe manuals have tended to be illustrated by lots of

snaps. Either of the celebrated capsule wardrobe "teamed" with fashionable shoes and a killer handbag, or by grisly photos of models demonstrating how a few basic items in an overnight bag will reveal to your weekend hosts that you have brought nothing but the clothes you stand up in and a red scarf. Halbreich's book reverses this trend.

Its typographic style is late Forties and Jeffrey Fulvimer's pretty pictures echo magazine illustration and fashion drawing of the period. Indeed, I felt the book seemed a direct successor to the little-known 1952 self-help masterpiece *Anita Colby's Beauty Book*, which also offers a few key pointers on wardrobe matters. So, what was the well-dressed closet wearing back in 1952? Er, a basic collection of dark solid colours, com-

plemented by a few top-quality accessories. Plus ça change.

'Secrets of a Fashion Therapist' by Betty Halbreich is published by Aurum Press and costs £12.95



Summer is becoming a cordial affair

Fizzy pop is out, it seems, and traditional English drinks are in - at least as a refreshing change for adults who want an alternative to alcohol. From elderflower cordial to ginger beer, the focus is on good old-fashioned recipes. By Nikki Spencer

IN a world of concerns about our health we are increasingly returning to Victorian values when it comes to summer refreshment. Elderflower cordial, elderberry cordial, traditional ginger beer and Victorian lemonade are just some of the old-style soft drinks available in supermarkets and in a growing number of cafes and bars.

The trend started about 10 years ago with family firms recreating old recipes and now the market is estimated to be worth about £25m. English drinks, particularly elderflower cordial, are exported all round the world. "People are rediscovering good old-fashioned tastes," says Peverel Manners, managing director of Belvoir. His father, Lord John Manners, was one of the first to start the Victorian drinks revival. "As a nipper I used to make elderflower cordial with my mother using an old recipe that came from Lady Astor, who probably got it from her cook. People used to ask to buy bottles of the cordial so, at the age of 64, my father decided to sell it. With the family name and the castle on the bottle (the company is run from a farm in the shadow of Belvoir Castle, home of Rutland) it went down a treat," he says.

Within a year other companies had followed suit and elderflower cordial has become an established soft drink for adults. Originally,

Belvoir used elderflowers collected from hedgerows by local people but now, like its main competitors Bottle Green and Thorncroft, it has planted its own orchards.

Most companies use a similar recipe. The flowers are emptied into vats with cane sugar, water, lemon and citric acid, although the quantities of sugar and elderflowers may vary. It clearly sells - Belvoir has gone from producing 1,000 bottles a year to a million - but is it any better for us than other soft drinks? "We

can't make specific health claims by law," Manners says, "but John Evelyn, the famous herbalist, wrote that elderflower was good for purging the blood, calming the nerves and treating colds and flu. Having said that," he adds, "the reason it's popular is none of these. It's because it's delicious - a taste between lychees and perfume - and it's totally natural. It has quite a bit of sugar but I think there is a lot of rubbish talked about sugar. It is a good source of energy."

Belvoir makes two versions of the

cordial, one without any preservative for the health food market, and one with preservative and a longer shelf-life for the supermarkets. Like Bottle Green and Thorncroft, Belvoir has also developed other old-fashioned cordials, such as ginger and blackcurrant, as well as some more modern varieties such as "lime and lemongrass" and "ginger and lime".

Another company that has recognised that adults eschewing alcohol may want something with a bit

more kick than the ubiquitous orange juice is Fentimans, which has also gone back to the recipes of its predecessors with its Traditional Ginger Beer and Victorian Lemonade. Managing director, Eldon Robson, says his grandfather used to sell old-fashioned pop from door-to-door around Durham from the early 1900s until the 1960s when he went out of business. Four years ago, armed with just a sheet of paper marked with two recipes, Eldon decided the time was ripe for a revival

of what he describes as "the original adult soft drink".

Fentimans' distinctly old-fashioned brown bottles can now be found in supermarkets, off-licences and bars all over the UK as well as the US. "It's got a far superior taste to most soft drinks," claims Eldon. "People come up to me at food and drink fairs and say that it's like their grandmother used to make." Fentimans' drinks, which are 0.5 per cent proof, are botanically brewed beverages using herbs and roots such as Chinese dried ginger root, or cochon. Ginger is good for you in all sorts of ways," advises Eldon. "It is particularly good for stomach upsets, especially morning sickness and sea-sickness, and generally improves your well-being."

Fentimans also uses botanical additives such as yarrow, speedwell and juniper but Eldon is loath to make health claims for them. Like Belvoir, Fentimans is looking to expand its range but plans are still in the experimental stage.

But traditional drinks aren't just for drinking. According to Manners, elderflower cordial can be used for everything from cooking fish to adding to salad dressings and sorbets. Even Victorian lemonade has its culinary uses. Eldon Robson tips a bottle in when he's making a chicken casserole. "You can use it just like wine," he says - "it adds flavour."

SUMMER DRINKS FOR SOFTIES

Left to right: Summer fruits Fruit & Barley drink, £1.05. Robinsons (available from all major supermarkets)

Fentimans Victorian Lemonade, 95p. Oddbins (0181 944 4400 for nearest stockist)

Traditional Style Cream Soda, 92p. Tesco (customer helpline 0800 505555)



Elderflower cordial, £2.29. Belvoir. (01476 870286 for stockists)

Sparkling Cherryade, 61p. Tesco helpline 0800 505555

Ginger cordial, £2.29. Belvoir. (01476 870286)

Peach Fruit & Barley drink, £1.05. Robinsons (all major supermarkets)

News of the weird

... and other monstrous stories.

By William Hartston

HOME NEWS

London
Bookmakers William Hill have cut the odds against Nasa confirming the existence of extra-terrestrial life by 1 January 2000 from 50-1 to 33-1. Nasa's spokesman, Graham Sharpe, said that most people gambling on the existence of ET were placing hefty bets which had to be taken seriously. William Hill stand to lose £1m if alien life is confirmed.

FOREIGN NEWS

Taiwan
The largest jigsaw puzzle in the world, comprising a total of 209,250 pieces, was completed at a hotel in Taipei this week. It portrays characters from the new Walt Disney film *Mulan* and covers 47 square metres. Organizers claim that the puzzle has 4,766 pieces more than the Dutch jigsaw listed as the largest ever in the *Guinness Book of Records*.

Tokyo
A research team believes it may have solved the problem of keeping monkeys that eat crops out of fields. They have developed a new weapon that sprays chilli pepper into the air to irritate the eyes and noses of monkeys passing in front of sensors that set off the spray. This has proved successful where electrified fences and loud noises had failed.

Albania
Drink and bingo have been blamed for an increase in the divorce rate over the past three

months in Albania. Thanks to an increasing passion for games of chance, particularly bingo, adultery and violence now account for only a third of all divorce petitions.

Spain
A man is reported to have beaten his girlfriend and broken her nose at the start of a demonstration in Madrid against domestic violence.

Poland
The Polish parliament has lifted its ban on advertising beer. The regulation had been in force for five years but has proved too hard to enforce.

Florida
A man in Florida has filed a suit against a nightclub after a topless dancer knocked him out and caused him whiplash injuries with her breasts. "It was like two cement blocks hit me," Paul Shimkonis said, describing the moment when the dancer, known as Tawny Peaks, "jumped up and slammed her breasts on my head", allegedly without warning or consent. He claims to have suffered: "Bodily injury, disability, pain and suffering, disfigurement, mental anguish and loss of capacity for the enjoyment of life." Ms Peaks' bust size is alleged to be 60HH.

Finland
A Finn who broke a shop window in order to steal some beer failed to make a big enough hole and was trapped by shards of glass when he tried to crawl through. He had to be cut free by police. He said he had been desperate for a drink.

Philippines

Authorities in Manila have denied that evil spirits had anything to do with a chandelier that nearly fell on President Joseph Estrada on his first day in office. There had been suggestions that the accident was connected with Estrada being the 13th president of the country, but the official explanation is a short circuit. Nevertheless, Estrada has asked his spiritual adviser to sprinkle the room with holy water to ward off bad luck.

United States

The US Agriculture Department has decided that salsa, a sauce made with chillies and tomatoes, may be classified as a vegetable in assessing the nutritional content of school meals and calculating the contribution of their cost that may be reclaimed from government sources. It is 17 years since the Department decided that ketchup is not a vegetable.

Chicago

A 43-year-old suspected thief was chased across 15 city blocks by a woman he had robbed, then dropped dead, apparently of a heart attack. The woman said that she saw Jerome Covington break the window of her car and snatch a computer and her purse. After the chase, which took place in a heatwave, he surrendered to the police, then collapsed in the back of a police car and could not be resuscitated.

SPORT

Referees

According to research by Ray-



Mayor Gabriele Albertini of Milan showed his support for fashion week by posing for photographers in an Armani swimsuit

mond Verheijen of the Free University of Amsterdam, soccer referees make mistakes because they try to stay too close to the action. His studies showed that referees made more accurate decisions when they were not rushing around trying to keep up with the ball.

Penalties

After watching England lose to Argentina in the World Cup, sports psychologist Matthew Goff believes the team were mentally unprepared for a penalty shoot-out. He says their performance could be improved by techniques of imagery, or "mental rehearsal". The technique involves recreating loud noises, trying to imagine the pressure and the taste of sweat, as well as physically taking the penalty. "By using

a psychological technique as well as physically taking the ball you can come up with the blueprint for the perfect penalty and you should be able to score every time," he said.

Brazil

The number of murders in Sao Paulo has dropped to the lowest rate this year thanks to the World Cup keeping people off the streets, officials say. There were only 32 people murdered in Sao Paulo last weekend, which is half the average number.

BUSINESS

Washington

According to a popular television business programme called *Squawk Box*, movements in US interest rates can be predicted

from the thickness of the briefcase of the Federal Reserve chairman. For eight months, the CNBC programme has been filming Alan Greenspan and his briefcase as he arrives at work. Their conclusion is: "A thin and neat briefcase indicates there will be no change in interest rate policy. An overstuffed briefcase indicates a change is in the works."

Thailand

Prostitutes took to the streets in the Javan city of Solo to protest about plans announced by the mayor to close their business down. Some of them carried banners saying: "The economic difficulties have made me become a prostitute."

They requested more time to accumulate savings before changing their profession.

PANDORA MELLY

GAMES PEOPLE PLAY

Trevor Phillips, 44, broadcaster and journalist

THE GAME that we used to play, not so much as a family but with our close friends, is called Jenga. This is a tower made up of small wooden blocks which you build up in layers. The idea is to push one block and place it on the top of the pile, so that you get as high as you can without the tower collapsing. As everybody takes a turn, the bottom part of the tower develops more holes, the top part gets more layers, and the loser is the person who makes the tower collapse.

What we tend to do with our friends is get together and have a barbecue. And you know how barbecues begin at two o'clock in the afternoon and suddenly it's two o'clock the next morning. What usually happens at round about one o'clock when we're all slightly whacked out, and people are thinking: "What shall we do next, because we don't want to go home, as this has all been such good fun" is somebody says "Jenga". And out it comes and we all try to build the tower. I think that the highest we've got up to is about 18 layers.

But anyway, the wonderful thing about it is that men and women are basically equal, although everybody has a different way of knocking out the blocks and lifting them up. Some people do a sort of single strike, or use two fingers. Others do a long, slow push. And some use a Woody Woodpecker tap-tap-tap, and out it comes, which is very character-revealing.

Of course, while you're playing, you're talking about all old nonsense. You get into a conversation and then five minutes later, somebody will say: "Whose turn is it?" It's a fascinating game and we play it to exhaustion.

Trevor Phillips presents "The Material World" on Radio 4 every Thursday at 4.30pm. His latest book, "Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain" by Mike Phillips and Trevor Phillips is published by HarperCollins (£16.99).

Jenga, from MB Games, is available from all good toy shops.

CONFESSIONS OF A PUZZLE MASTER

CHRIS MASLANKA'S THINKING MAN'S GUIDE TO WIMBLEDON AND THE WORLD CUP

WITH THE World Cup and Wimbledon on at the same time as I was preparing Puzzle Panel, there were bound to be a few clashes of fixture. I chose to follow what I could of the World Cup: it's once every four years and soccer is closer to my soul than tennis. Some compensation came from the mindsports in the programme. Some questions even seemed sporty in intent:

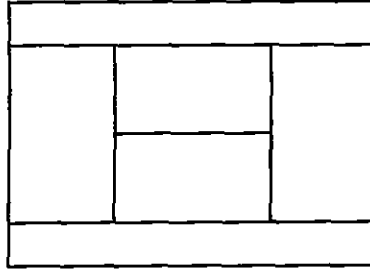
(1) Name two games which are anagrams of each other.

(2) Name a game in which the loser crosses the line first.

(3) Name a sport in which winners cross the line backwards.

Sports are a useful arena for puzzle-setting and recreational maths, as most people have played or watched them.

(4) How many rectangles can be found, all in all, in the tennis court shown at the top of the next column? (As my maths teacher once asked in a forlorn attempt to teach us the strategy of systematic counting).



Certainly the Puzzle Panel, now in its fourth programme, was tackling the puzzles more as a team, with co-operation usurping individual competitiveness. There was still the egotistical buzz of scoring, but it was a buzz deeper for being a social buzz.

Take Hartston's "26 L of the A" puzzle. But for the wrong answers whirling about the studio I wouldn't have solved it. You know the sort of thing - where you must realise that 7 D S stands for 7 Deadly Sins and that 10 D S stands for ... well, you work

it out, and we'll call that question (5).

This particular one had the quirkiness and inviting suggestiveness that turn out to be completely misleading:

(6) 1 H O A D
2 H O A C
3 H O A C C H

As misleading as H O A D, which at once put me in mind of Lew Hoad whose tennis club I had once visited near Malaga. But that was the wrong mind-set. Similarly, Two Hands On A Clock, though safe and fairly undeniable, offered only false promise. If it were right, what sort of Doodah would be involved in 1 Hand On A Doodah? It sounded like a song, but the likelihood of there being a song "One Hand On My Doodah" seemed tantalisingly slim.

Angela Newing's 2 Horns On A Cow offered hope of greener pastures and steered me back towards animals and Wham! I had it! Both 1 H O A D and 2 H O A C! Naturally I wanted to blurt out the answers, and then to run back and do one of those wiggly

dances by the corner flag. But chairing a programme such as this means sublimation of these base instincts and letting others have a shot at goal.

Besides, I wanted the hat-trick. Hartston vouchsafed that no one had yet solved the third one. That remark made a curious psychological difference. It clearly needed one of those weird and involuntary jumps the mind makes and that we take all the credit for. I stopped trying to think logically (it's easy, believe me) and the solution popped up like a striker trying to head in off a corner. I felt like crying "Gol, gol, gol, gol!" but this being not only England but also Radio 4, it came out as a subdued whoop.

Rob Eastaway, mathematician and author of *Why Do Buses Come in Threes?* (Robson Books, £12.95) favours questions touching upon everyday life. Certainly his puzzle gave me more pleasure than any tennis match I've ever watched or been thrashed in. It seems to tell you nothing, but in a sense it tells you everything.

You hear the following snippet of radio reportage about a tennis match: "Each of the last 6 points has been scored by X with a service ace. And yet, X is still behind in the match". From this it is possible, Eastaway contended, to deduce the score exactly, as well as something of the progress of the match up to that point.

While I was busy muttering the weird scoring rules of tennis to myself, Hartston had already solved it and was now explaining it logically and methodically. Had he been talking about the offside rule, I would have kept up with play. But I needed to look at the replay at my leisure.

Later, I plodded at my own pace through the curiously satisfying steps of the puzzle, and found that it was indeed possible to deduce the score and the exact point the match had reached. Even more outrageously, given that women's tennis only goes to three sets, it enabled you to deduce the sex of X. A most elegant - and sporting - way of deducing someone's sex.

SOLUTIONS

- 1) Polo and pool.
- 2) Tug of war, slow bicycle race, or sumo wrestling.
- 3) Rowing, swimming backstroke
- 4) 13. The trick is to count everything once and nothing twice. One way is to label each vertex with the number of rectangles having it as top left-hand corner. Then sum the numbers.
- 5) 10 Downing Street. Note how knowing that 7 D S stands for 7 Deadly Sins is less a help than a hindrance in solving 10 D S.
- 6) 1 Hump on a Dromedary, 2 Humps on a Camel, 3 Humps on a Camel called Humphrey (Children's riddle: What do you call a camel with three humps?)
- 7) X must have lost the first 2 sets, won the 3rd on the tie-break, ending with 2 aces and just won the first game of the 4th set with four aces. He must also be a man.

Puzzle Panel is on Radio 4 on Thursdays at 1.30pm, repeated Sunday 11 pm.

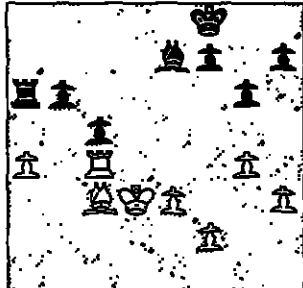
CHESS: WILLIAM HARTSTON

YOU DON'T realise it until you are watching a penalty shoot-out, but chess is just like football, really. In both games, the players pretend that it is all about brilliance and imagination, but such concepts play a minor part compared with the importance of not making mistakes.

Nobody remembers the names of the players who score in the penalty shoot-outs. It's those who miss who earn eternal fame.

In chess, we enjoy the illusion that good play wins games, whereas the accurate diagnosis is that it's bad play that loses them. That's why chess players like to watch penalty shoot-outs. We can all identify so well with that feeling of total dejection on the face of the man who misses the crucial penalty. It's a feeling we all suffer every time we realise that everything has gone wrong.

And it happens to the very best players. Take a look at the diagram position from a game in the Dortmund tournament this week. Alexei Shirov was playing White against Vladimir Kramnik and had, through calm and methodical strategy, secured some advantage in the endgame. Black's pawn majority on the Q-side has little hope of advancing, while White can increase his control of the board with moves such as f4, e4 and e5, combined with bringing his king into a threatening position with Ke4 and Kd5. It



may not be enough to win, but White certainly ought to be able to make his opponent suffer at little.

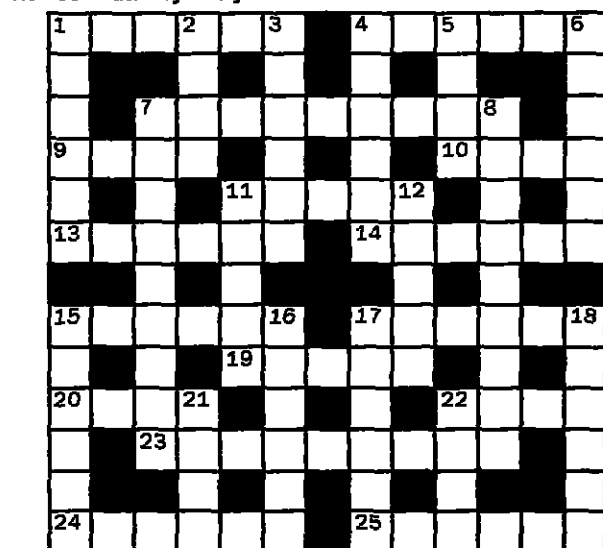
Shirov decided to invade with his king at once, and the game continued 1.Ke4 Rg7 2.Kd5 Rg7+ 3.Kc6 Rg6+ 4.Kc7 Re6. The first stage of the operation is complete and White has got his king in among his opponent's pawns.

Now came stage two: the advance of the pawns: 5.e4 Ke8 6.e5 Bg8+ 7.Kc8 Re7. This was probably when White began to get that sinking feeling. Was it really such a good idea to advance with his king? Perhaps 7.Kb7, intending Kc6 and Kd5 might have been a better idea.

The game continued 8.f4 Rg7+ 9.Kb8 Kd7 and White's game was desperate. If he does nothing he could lose his rook to Kc6 and Kd5, or find his king quickly chased into a mating net beginning with Kc6 and Rb7+. Shirov played 10.e6+ Kxe6 11.Re4+ Kd7 12.Be5 Re6 13.Ka7 Re6 14.Re1 Kc6 15.Rd1 Bc7 16.Ka6 Re8 and White resigned. After 65.Ka7 Bxe5 his game is hopeless.

CONCISE CROSSWORD

No.3854 Saturday 4 July



ACROSS

- 1 Behaved servilely (6)
- 2 Poet Laureate (6)
- 3 Of a bishop (9)
- 4 Delicate material (4)
- 5 Status (4)
- 6 Pinch (5)
- 7 Become more profound (6)
- 8 Get in the way of (6)
- 9 Joint (6)
- 10 Ornamental plaster (6)
- 11 Newspaper (5)
- 12 Smooth-talking (4)
- 13 Copied (4)
- 14 Many-legged creature (9)
- 15 Very sad (6)
- 16 Realm (6)

DOWN

- 1 Legendary (6)
- 2 Back of neck (4)
- 3 Repudiate (6)
- 4 Turkish pipe (6)
- 5 Equipment (4)
- 6 Person searching (6)
- 7 Odd (9)
- 8 Type of painting (9)
- 9 Lukewarm (5)
- 10 Pool of money (5)
- 11 Lump of precious metal (6)
- 12 Stratagem (6)
- 13 Was inclined (6)
- 14 Appoint (6)
- 15 Austrian composer (4)
- 16 Scottish architect (4)

Solution to yesterday's Concise Crossword:

ACROSS: 1 Warm, 3 Armorial (War memorial), 9 Taboo, 10 Defiant, 11 Hind, 13 Binocular, 14 Escape, 16 Treat, 18 Reservist, 20 Ear, 22 Chumel, 23 Cabal, 25 El Dorado, 26 Husar, DOWN: 1 Witch, 2 Rib, 4 Rodent, 5 Officer, 6 Incubate, 7 Liturgy, 8 Womb, 12 Dachshund, 14 Euratch, 15 Partner, 17 Titled, 19 Jack, 21 Relax, 24 Box.

BRIDGE: ALAN HIRON

Game all; dealer South	
North	South
♠ J 10 9 7	♠ A Q 7 4
♥ A Q 7 4	♥ A 10 9
♦ 9 7	♦ 9 7
West	East
♠ 6 5 3	♠ 4 2
♥ 10 8 3	♥ 1 9 2
♦ K Q J 3	♦ 7 6 5 2
♣ J 5 2	♣ K 6 4 3
South	North
♠ A K Q 8	♠ A Q 10 8
♥ K 6 5	♥ 8 4
♦ 8 4	♦ 8 4
♣ A Q 10 8	♣ A Q 10 8

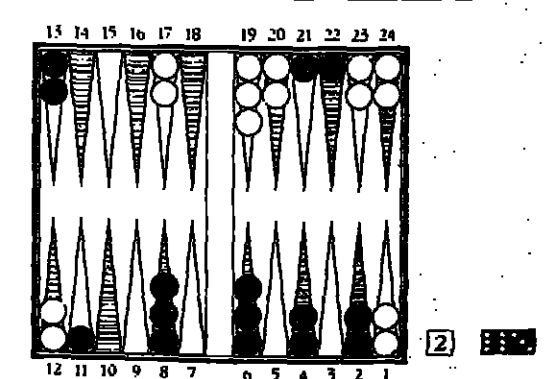
SOME PLAYERS are unable to resist temptation when they hold a moderately strong hand and hear encouraging noises from their partner. In spite of South's excesses in the bidding on this deal, he reached a playable contract but missed the best line of play.

South opened One Club, North responded One Heart, and South rebid One Spade. North's raise to Three Spades was music to his ears and he cue-bid Four Clubs. This was already slightly forward and, when North co-operated with Four Diamonds, it was surely rash to launch into Blackwood and, on hearing of two aces, go on to a slam.

West led ♠ K against Six Spades and it was clear that there was a lot of work to be done. South seemed to be in luck when he drew trumps and found them to divide 3-2, and there were further good news when the hearts divided 3-3 and permitted the discard of the losing diamond. Now the only remaining problem was the club suit. After deep thought, declarer ran ♠ 9 but this lost to the jack and, when he was forced with a diamond lead and ♠ K did not fall under the ace, the slam failed.

South's line of play depended on both major suits behaving and finding a favourable club position. I hope that you can see a distinct improvement. It seems that by far the best overall chance lies in an immediate simple finesse of ♠ Q at trick two. It may lead to immediate defeat (which would have had the virtue of saving time) but if it wins and ♠ A is not ruffed, then it is all over. Declarer can now ruff both his club losers on the table. Furthermore, he can withstand both a bad break in hearts and an adverse 4-1 trump distribution.

BACKGAMMON: CHRIS BRAY



AS BLACK in the above position I had survived an early blitz and now had a 63 to play. There are two very obvious choices: run a back man with 22/13 or make my own 5pt with 11/5, 8/5. The two moves have very different game plans behind them. In the first I am trying to run for home, in the second I am trying to block my opponent and survive his renewed attack on my two back men.

I fairly quickly decided that making my 5pt was the stronger play and did so. My opponent, a man not slow to express a view, quickly derided my play saying that 22/13 must be vastly superior. I begged to differ as I had made my play with two very clear reasons for doing so. First, if I run one man and my last man is attacked I no longer have the possibility of making a defensive anchor in my opponent's home board. This means that last man will be in constant danger until such time as I can run it to safety.

Second, if either of my back men is hit - for example with a 63 White will play 24/18, 63/- and I can return him from the bar, the fact that I have my own 5pt will be of significant value. If I can return him and my opponent stays on the bar I will win the game with the doubling cube.

This last variation is what actually occurred in the game and my opponent fumed for a good five minutes that I had won the game with an inferior play. In fact I don't think the play was particularly difficult to find but it does underscore the value of clearly evaluating a position before making play decisions.

The other bonus of the result was that my opponent, aggrieved at the result, then took three doubles he should have dropped in the next three games leaving me considerably ahead on the scoresheet. Backgammon is like any other game: once your opponent shows he is rattled, you are more than half way to victory.

A black and white photograph of five children walking away from the camera on a wet beach. The children are silhouetted against the bright, reflective sand and the ocean in the background. They are carrying various items, including buckets and a net, suggesting they have been playing or searching for something in the sand.

Striking views such as The Needles (below) compliment perfect pools and safe swimming for children

The perfect sandy paradise for children, there is also plenty of refreshment for grown-ups. By **Jane Lovatt**

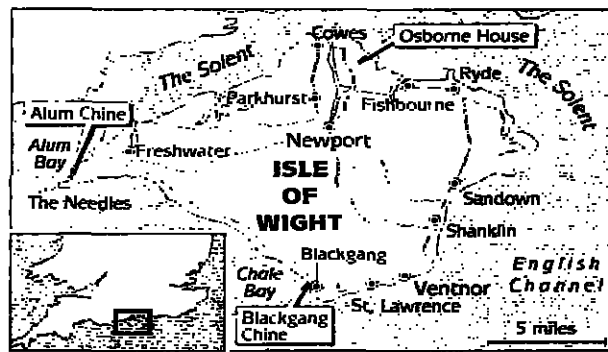
Beach huts, sand and pickled eggs – Ventnor on the Isle of Wight has all these and more. To ease the tension of an English seaside holiday, certain features are important. One: a clean sandy beach with safe bathing, and beach huts in which to shelter from the vagaries of the weather. Two: a good pub where adults can take it in turns to down a few well deserved drinks and recover from the weariness brought on by days with squabbling children.

At Ventnor the beach is part sand, part shingle, the waters are calm and there are original Victorian bathing huts to rent, which are stored away in the winter months to avoid erosion. The pub is called The Vol-

unteer and it is a marvellous place with red leather seats and an interior panelled in golden wood, where they sell local real ales and tangy pickled eggs. Inside this peaceful haven you can play darts, buy a ticket for the meat raffle, witness a pie-making competition and, on Sundays, enjoy complimentary winkles and pork scratchings with your drinks. I have never seen a child in there, which is nice for the person whose turn it is to relax.

Not that the other party will be missing out. Those weary of the beach can make use of a modest amusement arcade, a paddling pool in the shape of the Isle of Wight and an interesting seaside heritage museum, all on the front.

Further into town there's a wonderful old-fashioned sweet



shop where the confectionery is kept in jars and weighed out by the ounce. There is also no shortage of ice-cream vendors and inexpensive gift shops.

If the children do start to moan, set off for nearby Steep-hill Cove, a mile along the coastal path. You may need a stick to shoo the smaller ones on their way, but that need not

ioned canopied deckchair while your young companions scamper in an Enid Blyton kind of way looking for shrimps and splashing in the sea. There are a handful of quirky houses to admire and covet and you can buy lobster and crab from Mr Wheeler, a hardy fisherman who has lived in the cove all his life.

Reward your small charges with refreshments at the beach cafe, where they sell fresh coffee, home-made cakes and, no doubt, ginger beer. It all makes for a lovely experience, and before you know it you will be off duty again and back in The Volunteer, swigging a pint of Hobgoblin.

If you do want to take a trip as a family, there is the jolly seaside town of Ryde or the pretty town of Freshwater, where Tennyson pronounced

the air to be worth a shilling
a pint.

The striking rock formation of the Needles is also close to Alum Chine, where you can fill a glass vessel with different coloured sands and make your own souvenir. Or at Cowes you can walk along the cobbled streets and hope that some of the glamour of the famous yachting week will rub off on to you.

The seaside town of Shanklin, just a few miles away from Ventnor, has a long sandy beach, as well as old English cafés selling cream teas galore. St Chale Bay there is Black-gang Chine, a surreal theme park built in the Sixties that jumps out of the gentle landscape in an alluring manner. You can even visit Osborne House at East Cowes, once the favourite residence of Queen Victoria.

"BE POLITE and drink the local beer" – that, I contend, is all a new campaign to make us "better" tourists boils down to.

On Thursday, Voluntary Service Overseas launched its Worldwide campaign to persuade holidaymakers to be more thoughtful about where, and how, they travel. A commendable notion, but I fear that the invective employed could backfire.

Earlier this year I paid £500 for a holiday in the Gambia. About £50 of this, I learnt on Thursday, would have found it way directly into the Gambian economy. "Not acceptable", says VSO. Not ideal, agreed, but until West Africa starts manufacturing aircraft and jet kerosene it is inevitable that only a small proportion of the total cost of a holiday involving 5,000 miles of travel will be earned by the destination country.

Just as I was thinking that (a) at least 250 found its way to a more deserving part of the world than, say, Florida; (b) I'd spent a couple of hundred quid, mainly on local beer; and (c) that even after the beer I had done my best to behave in a respectful manner - I found



**SIMON
CALDER**
*Not a harmless
tourist – a
'necessary evil'*

myself being described as
part of "a necessary evil"

You thought you were going on holiday - but in fact you are sustaining the world's injustices. From this winter, tourists on charter flights to the Gambia expecting a jolly re-run of *Blackadder* will be subjected instead to a VSO video telling them how to behave.

Travel has huge potential to alleviate poverty and increase understanding, but the new campaign risks its message being misinterpreted as "if you go on holiday to the developing world

you're a terrible person" – with the result that we switch to wealthier destinations.

To try to back up its campaign, VSO conducted the most fatuous survey of the year so far. Talk about leading questions: "Would you object if tourists lined up to take photographs of your family and home without asking permission first?"

I'm on the side of the one in five respondents who answered "No" - particularly if the main source of foreign currency earnings for my society were tourism, and I happened to run the adjacent souvenir-and-soft-drinks stand.

Though a trip in Concorde is about as cramped and uncomfortable as a tackle from Roberto Ayala, it was kind of British Airways to send the supersonic aircraft to rescue the England football team from France after their defeat at the hands of Argentina.


BA had promised players from England or Scotland a free supersonic weekend to Barbados if either had won the World Cup. So why weren't Scotland offered a lift home on Concorde too?

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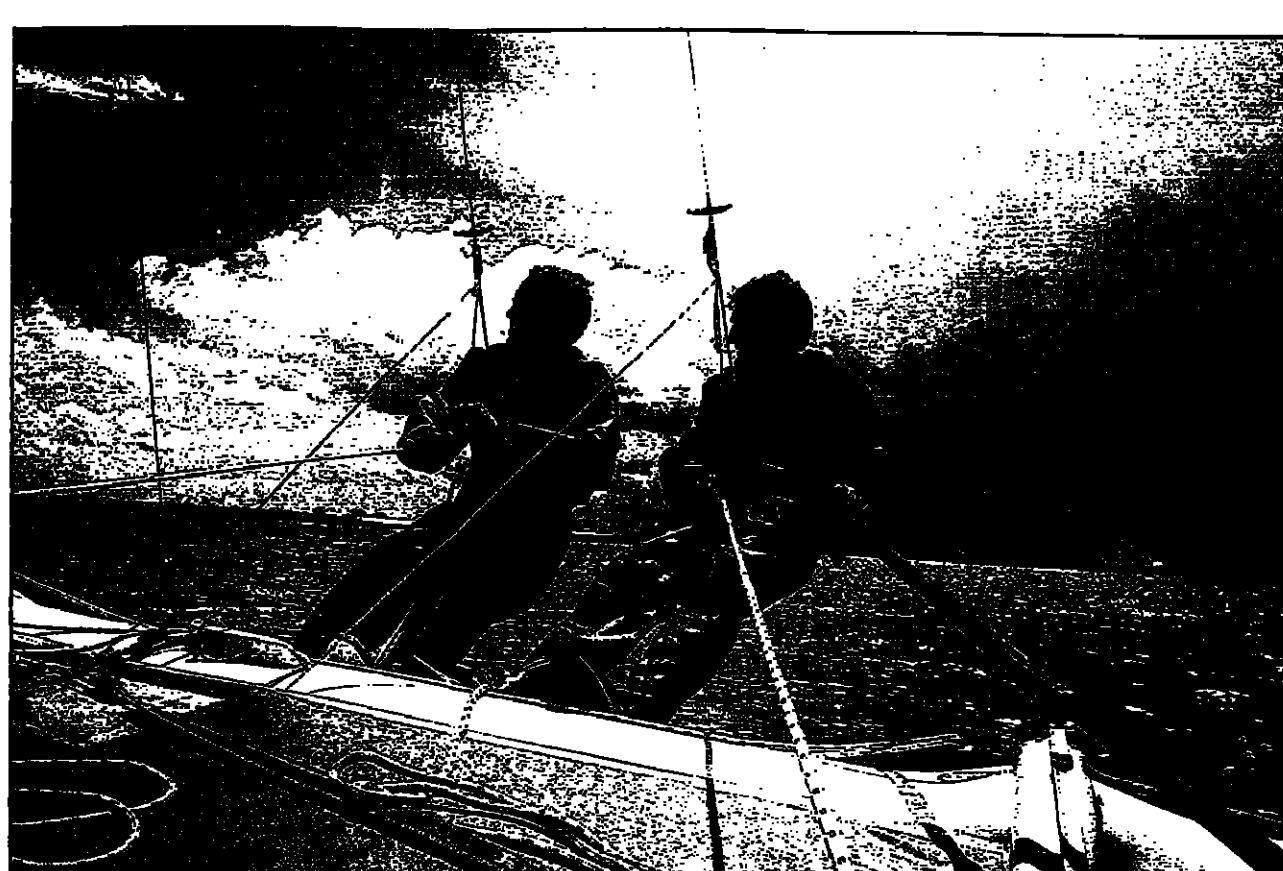
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Don't look down: a catamaran takes no prisoners, so even with an excellent helmsman there is plenty for you to do to take your mind off things

Penny and Eric Kendall

Catamaran sailing, with its emphasis on skill and grace, is a thrilling contact sport. By Eric Kendall

A household moggy with the instincts of a wild cat

High above the water, dangling on a wire, it is hard to know where to look - down below you, at the stern, or at the bow? Everywhere there is a bit too much evidence of speed through the water, which exaggerates the tense exhilaration of "on the edge" catamaran sailing. What about up? Even worse: a kind of reverse vertigo as you look along the tiny wire stretched taut from the top of the mast, which alone holds all your weight.

But it is not that bad. Even with an excellent helmsman in charge, you have to do your bit, which helps keep your mind occupied. High-performance catamarans do not carry passengers, nor do they take any prisoners: if you are on board you have something to do and, more important, something to hold on to, even if it is only a tiny rope. This ameliorates the problem of what to concentrate on. You study your jib intently for the slightest sign of a flap, and listen out for the next command from the helm.

This is all-or-nothing sailing.

These cats are designed so that in a moderate breeze or more they need to be dramatically counter-balanced. Both helm and crew use a trapeze to hang off the edge of the boat, allowing it to sail efficiently (read "fast") and not capsize. Do not be fooled by the wide spread of the two hulls. A monohull of the same beam would have the handling characteristics of a car ferry, but the cat becomes nimble and thrilling the moment it lifts one hull from the water. If the weight is not right, it threatens to bury the bow of the other hull into the water, causing the dreaded "pitchpole", with the entire

craft somersaulting through the air. Armed only with a wetsuit and a buoyancy aid, you may be inclined to jump for it, but when you are clipped on to the end of the wire it is probably not that easy. When instructions come from the helm, they are to the point. If you are going about, the first thing to do is to jump in off the trapeze - not easy at first - and back on deck, for want of a better word, to operate jib sheets etc. All the while you must remember to keep your head down and do precisely as you are told.

Thanks to the wide spacing of the two hulls, the craft works in an entirely different way to a monohull, making it harder to go about, but at least the steering does not feel twitchy. This is the same side of the cat: in a gentle breeze it is great to learn on, a wide, stable platform with plenty of space on the comfortable trampoline (the mesh deck stretched between the two hulls) to sit on during quiet moments. But it gets its claws out as unpredictably and with the same speed as a household moggy. Plenty of sail in relation to boat size is the key to sensational acceleration and outright pace as compared to a dinghy, particularly with the gen-

naker up - a kind of monstrous extra jib that makes the whole boat literally hum with speed. Minimal drag from the two slim hulls, one of which tends to be out of the water for much of the time, makes it even faster. For optimum performance, the windward hull should just kiss the waves; for maximum effect, getting it four or five feet off the surface of the water with the cat tilted towards 45 degrees is the only way to go, though, with an extra strong puff of wind, it could also be the way to go over.

There is also a hidden surprise for novice trapeze artists: just when you are feeling secure on the wire, a sudden lurch can send you ping-pong-ing, flying in an arc until you hit the mast with a bang, and drop between the two hulls for a taste of keel-hauling. Just remember that a cat may have nine lives, but they never said anything about the crew.

Crewing a cat
Since the Hobbie Cat set the agenda 20 years ago, small cat sailing has been the fastest, most dramatic way for two people to sail together. Novices can take lessons to learn to crew and helm - or find someone at a club who is willing to take you on.

Queen Mary Sailsports (01784 248881), based near Staines on London's biggest bit of water, runs courses for all levels of ability and is a Laser demonstration centre. Here you can also try out the latest Dart 16 catamaran. The Dart Hawk - an astonishingly fast racing cat - is currently taking the Formula 18 racing circuit by storm; after an afternoon aboard I can see why.

The Laser Centre (01295 268191), 6 Riverside, Banbury, Oxon. OX16 8TL has regular Laser sailboat and Dart catamaran demonstration days and can provide information on regional courses. The Royal Yachting Association (01703 627400) can provide details of RYA-approved schools around the UK.

National Go Boating Weekend, 18-19 July, could be the ideal chance to try crewing a cat. Free and low-cost events around the country introduce newcomers to sailing, canoeing, narrowboat, windsurfing, rowing, powerboating and waterskiing, all with expert guidance on hand. Call 0345 668444 for local details.

Thanks to Will Woodhead and Dave Graham.

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Chugging through the locks on the Rochdale Canal in Yorkshire has some excitement, too. By Ann Walker

How about a summer holiday in Todmorden? The Rochdale Canal opened in 1804 and was originally designed by one of the best known of canal engineers, William Jessop. It possesses magnificent scenery, peace and quiet in the middle of the summer season, and several hire boat centres are conveniently placed for exploring this fascinating and relatively unknown waterway.

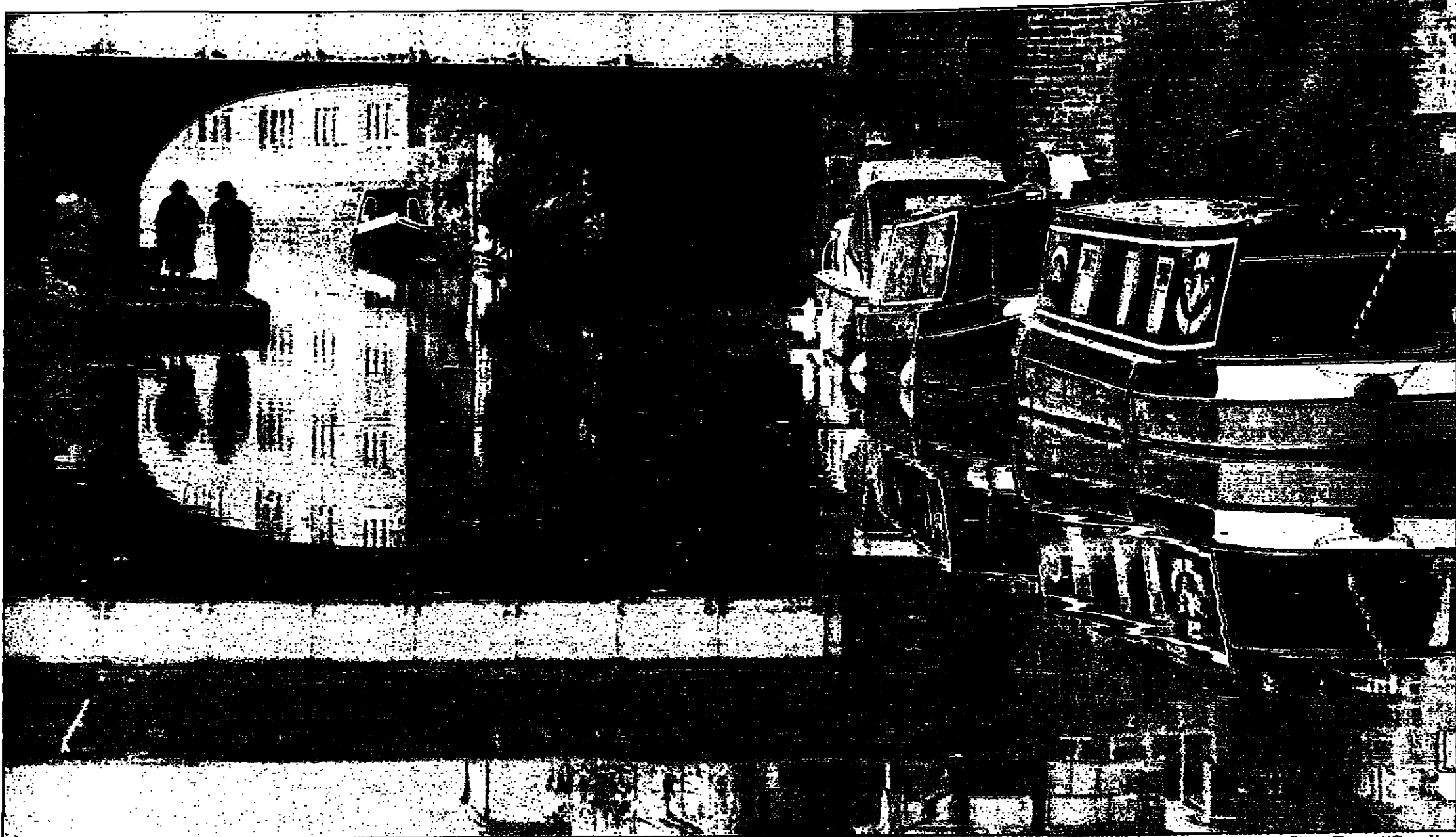
Access to the navigable part of the Rochdale from the Yorkshire side is via the Calder and Hebble Navigation. The two canals join at Sowerby Bridge and it is here that the excitement begins. The deepest lock on the system awaits you – a masterpiece of engineering that encompasses two of the original locks lost when the canal was closed in the Fifties. The blockage at Sowerby Bridge, caused by a supermarket car park, was one of the major obstacles to the re-opening of the canal and Tuel Lock was completed and opened only in 1996, enabling access from the main system.

Sowerby Bridge itself has some good shops, and restaurants offering a range of cuisines including Indian and Indonesian. Top of the list, though, comes Gimbals (01422 838329) – a mere five-minute walk from the canal basin, with a remarkable window display and excellent food.

Suitably replenished, you should be more than prepared for the excitement to follow. Up two locks, under a road bridge with an alarming bend – and it's into the biggest void you've ever seen. You can barely see the lock-keeper, Howard Mann, at the top, and the concrete slabs that form the walls seem to go on for ever. Fortunately the rise is gradual and you emerge into a peaceful straight run with ample time to recover before the four locks you need to pass through before reaching Hebden Bridge.

It is a pretty run, passing through Luddenden Foot and Mytholmroyd. Look out for Walkieys Clogs on your left just after Mytholmroyd; if you have time you can moor up, make a quick dash to the factory and get a pair of made-to-measure clogs in any colour combination you could wish for.

Hebden Bridge itself is a glorious amalgam of traditional mill town and haven for New Age devotees. There



A pretty run brings you to Hebden Bridge, a traditional mill town that has plenty of New Age appeal, too

Steve Forrest/Guzelian

A slow boat to Rochdale

TIPS FOR CRUISING THE ROCHDALE

Hire boat firms suitable for cruising the Rochdale
Baltimore Boats, Todmorden (01706 816472); Pickwell and Arnold, Lock 15 (01706 812411); Shipley Bridge Marina, Mirfield (01924 491872); Shire Cruisers, Sowerby Bridge (01422 839565).

Other useful information
Tuel lock is closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, so you need to plan your itinerary accordingly. If you use your own boat, remember that diesel may be hard to find – Shire Cruisers usually has some available. Most boatyards have a small

chandlery. A new chandlery has opened by Lock 16.

If you are hiring, make sure you know how to work locks before you leave your hire base. Shipley bridge marina provides books, etc on its boats.

Short breaks may also be available from the hire base – check when booking.

Bicycles are useful, for "lock-wheeling". This means cycling ahead of the boat to set the locks in order to prevent delays at locks if they are against you.

Always share locks with other boats if this is at all possible. This saves time and water, both precious commodities.

There is a 4mph speed limit on all canals.

Always, always slow down when passing moored boats; you can drag them off their moorings or break all their china!

Don't overestimate how far you can travel in the time available. The speed limit may be 4mph, but the chances are that you won't average more than 2mph because of the locks.

Take reliable waterproof clothing – there's no escape from rain on a boat.

Wear shoes that have a good grip on the soles; you really don't want to fall in!

The living dead of Westminster Abbey

In a little-known museum next to the Houses of Parliament stand effigies of the famous dead. Fearsome facsimiles, says Beverly Pagram



The 'Ragged Regiment' line up at Undercroft

Dean and Chapter of Westminster

FOR NEARLY 300 years a dead parrot has been one of the great crowd-pleasers at Westminster Abbey.

The bird in question is a tatty old African Grey. The oldest stuffed bird in England sits beakily in the Undercroft Museum beside an alarming wax effigy of his former owner, Frances, Duchess of Richmond – a vision dressed in the corset, ermine stomacher, green silk stockings, coronet and red velvet robe she wore to the coronation of Queen Anne in 1702.

Frances and her pet Polly, "Which had lived with her grace for 40 years", are part of a remarkable collection of 18 English funeral effigies known as the Ragged Regiment. Glassy of eye and decrepit of wig, these pre-Tussaud replica royals and other persons of renown have now been taken over by English Heritage, which is committed to conserving the bizarre bodes, and has installed them in beautifully lit glass viewing-cases.

Once upon a time the gaudily dressed likenesses stood eerily about on the floor of the Abbey, near the tombs of the dead. Now, Miss Havisham-like, they peer at us from behind glass. King Charles II stares bibulously out from beneath a ridiculous set of ringlets, his waxen skin a dark, gingery brown, as if he has gone mad with the Boots self-tan lotion. Even more disturbing, his left foot is pitched forward in its satin bootie, as if he is about to stride out of his cabinet.

Nearby lurks Elizabeth I, a stout personage with terrifying pinched lips and hooded eyes. According to legend this likeness was made from the Virgin Queen's death mask.

Herein lies the origin of these fearsome facsimiles. They were for centuries on-lookers at the burial rituals of their human templates, survivors of a custom dating back to Roman times, when nobles had wax masks of themselves and their ancestors carried to the graveside.

Early English kings warned to this idea. Records dating back to the 14th century tell of life-size effigies of deceased royals being carried with great pomp and heraldry to their interment. The Undercroft Museum contains a small collection of these ancient, mainly wooden relics: Edward III, Anne of Bohemia, Katherine de Valois, Elizabeth of York and Anne of Denmark.

The Desire to Impress Even After Death award should really go to James I. Before he died on 27 March 1625, he paid

a fortune for "Entombeinge of Royall Corps and Bowells". He also shelled out for a sumptuously dressed effigy, to be carried on a hearse designed by Inigo Jones. This extraordinary catafalque apparently featured a dome, pillars and four allegorical ladies modelled in plaster of Paris. More than 9,000 people were given black mourning clothes so that they could pay their proper respects to the puppet-king.

Such hubris has its own rewards. All that now remains of James I is a headless wooden torso languishing in a conservation laboratory cupboard.

A rival in the ego stakes who fared better with posterity is Catherine, Duchess of Buckinghamshire, who was obsessed with her royal descent as a natural daughter of James II. On her deathbed she peevishly sent for her funeral canopy to check that it was up to her exacting standards, before she would agree to being encoffined beneath it. According to Horace Walpole, she made her ladies vow to her that

even if she should be lying comatose, they would not sit down in her presence before she was dead.

Catherine, with her yellowish wax face and staring glass eyes with their eyelashes of human hair, is a more alarming subject than the somewhat bathetic William III and his consort Mary. Mary was five inches taller than her husband; as the catalogue points out, his Grace had to be placed "on a low footstool".

Not only was Horatio, Viscount Nelson, similarly vertically challenged; he was also famously short of an arm. However, his characteristic waxwork, dressed in the great sailor's own clothes, including the shoe buckles he was wearing when he fell, does not rely on any special furniture or props for effect.

Nelson's effigy, made in 1806, was the last to be placed in Westminster Abbey. Since then the Ragged Regiment have had a chequered career. After their original glory they were abandoned as unfashionable, and were left forgotten and dusty.

During the Second World War they even experienced the ignominy of being stored in Piccadilly Tube station (not the kind of sight you would like to confront on a dimly lit platform).

The on-going programme of restoration should be applauded. As the Prince of Wales says in his foreword to the exhibition's accompanying book, *The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey*: "These full-size representations of kings, queens and distinguished public figures, many of them in their own clothes and with their own accoutrements, constitute a gallery of astonishingly life-like portraits stretching over more than four centuries of British history."

The Undercroft Museum (0171-233 0019), is in the Abbey cloisters, London SW1. Open daily, 10.30am-4pm, admission £2.50 (does not include admission to the rest of the Abbey). *The Funeral Effigies of Westminster Abbey*, edited by Anthony Harvey and Richard Mortimer (the Boydell Press, £10)

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THE *Café Crème Guide to the Cafés of Europe* 1998 is a glossy guidebook that takes you on a café tour around the Continent, from Brussels to Budapest. The writers adopt the same policy as the travel pages of *The Independent*: the guide is completely independent in its editorial selection; it does not accept free hospitality from any café mentioned.

So *The Independent* is pleased to sponsor, in association with Café Crème, a mouth-watering competition that could win you a weekend break to one of the great café societies of Europe.

Today there is a chance to win a great weekend for two in the Spanish capital. You will receive a return flight from London to Madrid; transfers to a three-star hotel for two nights; bed-and-breakfast accommodation; £100 in spending money; and an all-important copy of *Cafés of Europe*. Twenty-five runners-up will receive a copy of the book, which retails at £12.99. If you are unlucky this time round, you can buy a copy of the guide at a special price of £9.99, including postage and packing; call our hotline on 01582 842112.



Just answer these three questions, complete the tie-break and send your entry to Madrid, Café Crème Guide to the Cafés of Europe Competition, PO Box 4013, London E14 5DE. The deadline for all entries is 17 July 1998.

Usual Independent Newspapers rules apply. The Editor's decision is final.

1. The Café Crème Spanish Café of the Year is the handsome old Café Gijón. Is Gijón:

- (a) A town on Spain's Costa Verde
- (b) A delicacy served in the café, involving plaice
- (c) Spain's favourite mustard

2. The Café Viena in Madrid has two saloons: which of these is not one of them:

- (a) Mozart saloon
- (b) Schubert bar
- (c) Schoenberg's spit-and-sawdust

3. In the context of Madrid's cafés, *sucave* means:

- (a) the standard of dress required for taking *tapas*
- (b) buying everyone in the bar a drink
- (c) a mild blend of coffee, as opposed to *fuerte* (strong).

Tie-break: in 20 words or fewer, describe the best ambience you have ever experienced in a café.



The beautiful Retiro Park

Give me a home to roam in...

Frank Bough was unsure about caravans. But then he stayed in one

AS WE drove on to the site and pulled up alongside number 152 (the caravan we had been loaned for three weeks), the van two doors down was in flames, burning very rapidly to the ground.

Gas cylinders were exploding like bangers on Guy Fawkes. A pathetic figure in a pair of pinstripes and shorts was trying to extinguish the fire with a garden hose.

Not a good start. I did not want to be there in the first place. It was kind of our friends to lend us the caravan, and it was in an exceedingly pleasant wood, a mile or two behind France's Mediterranean coast.

I had just escaped from Moscow and a thoroughly unpleasant month covering the Olympic Games. I did not want a caravan; I wanted five stars; I wanted *haute cuisine*; and as Cliff Morgan used to say, with hot and cold running maids, and as far as possible from the appalling Cosmos Hotel, with its dreadful food and oppressive armed guards.

As an antidote to all that, self-catering and a chemical toilet in a French wood simply did not seem to fit the bill. But it did, to our astonishment, and we've owned one of our own for the past 18 years.

There was no chemical toilet, but mains drainage, three-pin British plugs, a fridge, a washing machine, a dishwasher and a microwave. (Yes, the owner was big in the white goods business).

We had an absolutely wonderful time in this - and well, that was the problem. What do we call it? It was a caravan, for sure. The French neighbours call it their "mobile home" in spite of the fact that it will never move again. Years ago, a tabloid

newspaper called it a shed. A unit? Too dull. A plastic paradise?

Many of the early homes were trucked from southern England in 1972, when the English pioneers of this venture risked their all for a modest foothold in France. There are over 150 of us now, all told. Some live there permanently; some do six months; others just holiday for a week or two. There are those who can fix your teeth, give you a liver transplant, or deliver babies.

The place is run by a committee, elected by the owners. The president is a splendid chap who used to drive French trains. He runs it as a benevolent dictatorship. Any breach of the rules (no lettings, for example) is rapidly followed by a written reprimand which suggests that on your next visit you will be taken out and hung by the neck until you are dead. Firm but fair.

I read this week that the British are returning to France in numbers, looking for that charming pile of old stones, overlooking the vineyard. Who will cope, I ask, when the rising damp meets the creeping rot? Who will be there to deal with the burglary, the vandalism, the fire?

In contrast, running our patch in the sun is a piece of gâteau. The day before we arrive, power and water will be switched on, and a couple of bottles of rosé put in the fridge.

Although I'd never sell it to you, if I did, £70,000 is what we'd be talking about.

Some caravan, some shed!

Frank Bough presents *Travel Live on the cable and satellite station Travel Channel*. The programme returns on 14 September.

Surviving the family holiday

WHEN FAMILY holidays just meant Skegness, all you had to worry about was remembering your raincoat. Today's intrepid family travellers are faced with a much more daunting array of threats. So here are quick fixes for the top five holiday hazards.

On the road
A car seat does not need to weigh more than a Space Shuttle to work effectively. For babies a good buy is the KL Jeenay Nest Egg (£19.99 from Mothercare): polystyrene and ridiculously light. For older children you can hire an inflatable seat (£14.73 for two weeks from Lilliput). This is compact and is ideal for use in planes as well.

Andrew Howard, Head of Road Safety at the AA adds, "If

there are limited seat belts in the vehicle, use them for adults, whose bodies would end up crushing children in accidents.

"Face your driving - it is unrealistic to attempt the South of France in a day. There are also dangers from people looking the wrong way before turning or crossing the road. Confirm your instincts before acting."

On the plane
Go native. British airlines are strictly regulated and have higher safety standards than some other carriers. As the Civil Aviation Authority points out, "It is illegal for a UK airline not to carry things like supplementary loop belts for infants. You can also use an ap-

proved car seat on board for older children - but tell the airline first."

Things that go buzz in the night
Mosquitoes are not just a nuisance - they can also be lethal, carrying anything from encephalitis to dengue fever. The most alarming disease they spread is malaria.

After the recent bad press, you may worry about giving your children the anti-malaria drug Lariam. For countries where malaria is a threat, Lariam is not the only option, says Dr Roger Webber from the London School of Tropical Medicine.

"Visit your GP. There are other preventive medicines suitable for short visits which

come as paediatric preparations. A mosquito net can be 100 per cent effective when impregnated with a repellent. Also look out for Mosi-Guard Natural, which uses eucalyptus oil."

On the beach
In these times of melanoma mania, the sun is at last being treated with the respect it deserves.

Mike Brown, Formulation Manager for sunscreen at Boots says, "Choosing an SPF factor of 30 to 50 gives you a good margin for error. But the secret is in the application. Put it on liberally in the shade and let it soak in for ten minutes to avoid it rubbing off."

"Products out of a bottle are only part of a total safety pack-

age - hats and T-shirts all help too."

Buy your sunscreen duty-free at the airport to save paying 17.5 per cent VAT for sun protection.

In the hotel
RoSPA advises, "Spend a few minutes doing a safety audit. Look at fire exit routes, and move any furniture on balconies which might provide a step up for small children. Walk the pool floor, checking depths and submerged hazards."

Among all the other precautions, however, don't forget the wise words of a mother of six: "Give them ice cream the same colour as their clothes. It saves a lot of washing."

AA: 0990 448866
British Airways Travel Clinics: 01276 683040
Lilliput: 0171-720 5554
Medical Advisory Services for Travellers Abroad (MASTA): 0891 224100, a premium-rate number. MASTA will send a personalised health brief by first class return post, and has a mail order catalogue of useful travel products.
RoSPA: 0121-348 2000
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office Travel Advice Unit, 0171-238 4503 or 4504; consulted on BBC 2 Cee-fax, page 470 onwards; or accessed on the Internet at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

SANDRA LEATON GRAY

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RED CHANNEL

A MOSCOW newspaper this week exposed the rip-offs at the city's Sheremetyevo airport, with tales of travellers being charged \$200 by Mafia-controlled taxi drivers for the half-hour run to the city centre - and threatened with violence if they argued.

Inbound, I survived thanks to being met by a pre-arranged car. Leaving, it was a different story.

My travel agent said I should allow an hour to complete the necessary formalities on the way home. This proved woefully inadequate - I advise at least three.

There were 42 people in front of me in the customs queue, and the line moved

very, very slowly. It became clear that the plane would leave long before I even reached the check-in desk. So I barged to the front. The customs officer was suspicious, surly and slow.

After checking in - more truculence - just 10 minutes remained until departure and ahead of me, another long line - this time waiting for the emigration check.

Another queue jump, and on to the departure gate with moments to spare. No time for the duty-free shop and certainly none for a leisurely pint of stout at the airport's Irish pub.

TONY GRANT

GREEN CHANNEL

MILTON KEYNES famously imported concrete cows to emphasise its rural credentials: now Switzerland's largest city is doing the same with glass fibre cows.

Visit Zürich between now and 10 September and you will see 800 or so life-size cows painted as cheese, chocolate and almost anything else you can think of. They are part of an open-air art exhibition, *Country in Sight*, organised by the City Union.

Local businesses have sponsored 400 artists to paint the cows, at a cost of between 1,500 and 3,000 SFr per cow (£625-£1,250). Designs include a

desert-island scene for a travel agency, a "bellboy cow" on duty outside a hotel, and a cow decorated with fruit for a grocer's. There are "car-cows", with wing-mirror ears, and "clothed" cows in sportswear or business suit and tie. One, wearing a pair of swimming trunks, poses on a diving-board, apparently about to dive into Zürich's river Limmat.

The humour and inventiveness of the project counteract Zürich's image as a boring business centre. The result is a city that, for the next two months, is really a sight to behold.

ROSALIND WHYTE

CAN YOU Rearrange

the following words into a well known phrase:

Dull, is, city, Brussels, a?

Same sea. Different bottle of fish.

Ever wondered why the fish you get in Brussels is so much better than other fish even though they all come from the same sea? The plain fact is, Brussels has so many good restaurants, you'll be hard pressed to find a bad one, although in truth, there are a few mediocre eateries where you can spot many a homesick English diner. So if you do, remember to keep well clear.

Brussels has more beers than you can shake a... erm stick at. There are light beers, dark beers, raspberry flavoured beers, FLAT beers, FIZZY beers, EVEN beer flavoured beers. On a slightly more elevated note, there are many monasteries in Belgium that moonlight as

breweries. (Truly heaven on earth). All this goes some way to explaining why beer is something of a religion over here and why it has become a shrine to connoisseurs of the frothy stuff.

So many beers, so few outlets.

The heart of Europe, but you have to find the pulse.

To the inexperienced eye, there's no duller place on earth. But in reality, there are so many things to do in Brussels. You can eat (very well), you can drink (very much) and you can live life (to the full). So take a deep breath and book a weekend in Brussels at bargain prices. Then you can see what you've been missing.

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Following the ghost of Harry Lime

The Third Man is still leading visitors a merry dance through the streets of Vienna.

By Jacqueline Karp Gendre

Long after the last twang of the zither has faded away, the film continues to haunt us – that sudden play of light on Orson Welles' hand and face, the shadowy lanes of the *Innere Stadt*, retreating footsteps, the final gripping chase through the sewers. And long after the city of Vienna ceased to be the "city of undignified ruins" that the director and the writer, Carol Reed and Graham Greene, knew and portrayed – a city with over 200,000 homeless and one house in five destroyed, controlled by the four powers and divided like Berlin into sectors requiring ID passes – the mystique of *The Third Man* lives on. In fact, for one mother and daughter guided-walk team, *The Third Man* is big business even today, attracting more people than Jewish Vienna or the Vienna of the Hapsburgs, Brahms or Freud.

Perhaps the best place to set off in search of *The Third Man* is the Friedrichstrasse station. Looking east, beyond the grey Danube canal lies the former Russian sector, the Second Bezirk, behind you, to the west, stretches the area that used to be divided between the three Western powers. The *Innere Stadt*, the inner city enclosed by the 19th-century Ring, was internationally run, and the one place where officials of all four countries drove around together in military jeeps.

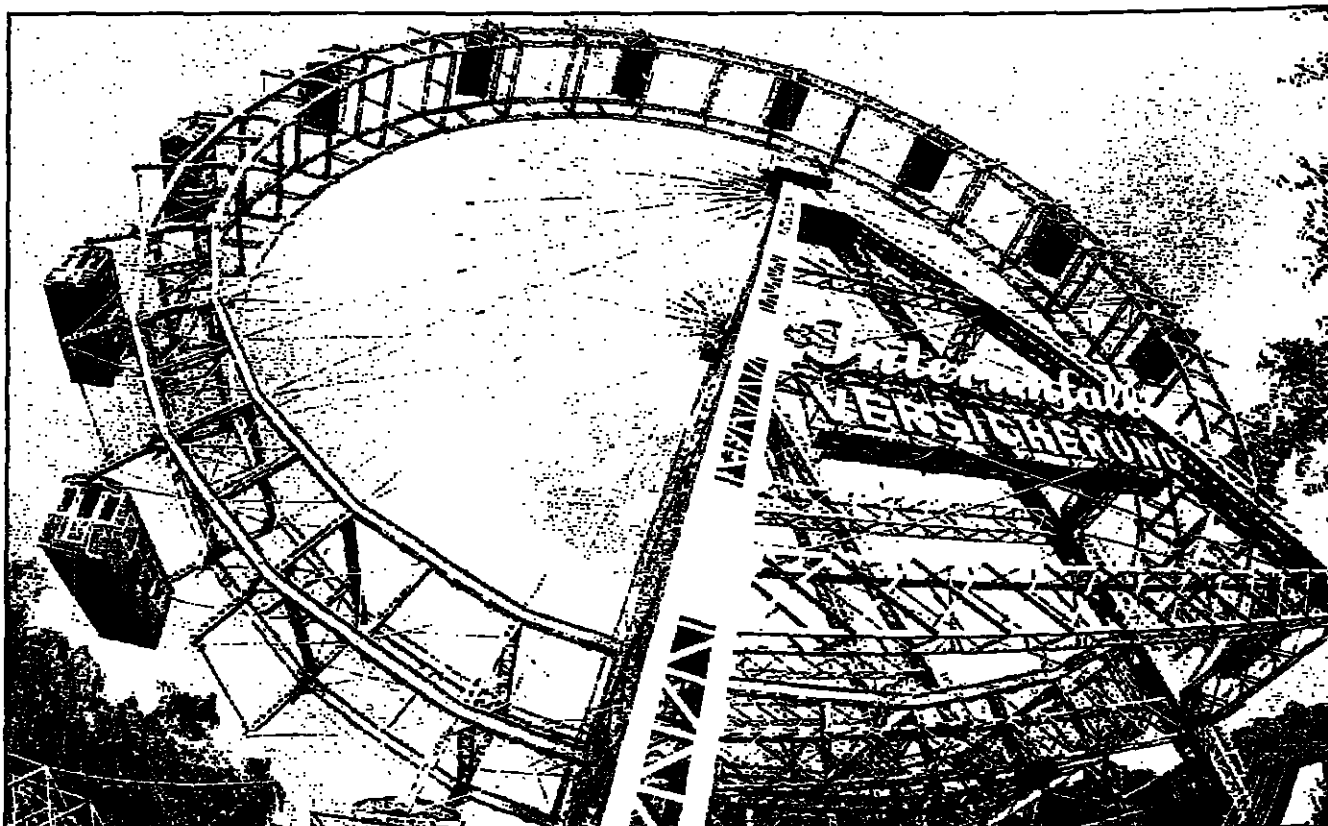
Beneath the station is the entrance to the sewer overflow – smelly on dry and on rainy days. This small part of the 5,000km network is all that is still open to the public. The rest of the tunnels are now blocked off after the temptation for young Viennese to skateboard alongside them led to many serious accidents.

About half of the network – in existence since medieval times – is in theory walkable, though in order to do so you would need to be bent double and struggling against fast-

flowing currents. Moreover, the sewer that passes under the Danube into the old Russian sector is only 70cm deep; negotiable perhaps by Harry Lime but hardly by Orson Welles. So Carol Reed had a problem: the most thrilling episode in the story was unworkable on film. There was simply no room for the cameras.

Reed could have got round it by using the vast network of medieval cellars which Vienna also possesses, but he decided in the end to use the other river that flows through Vienna, and which gave the city its name, the Wien. On account of its propensity for flooding, the town planners of Emperor Franz-Joseph's time decided to canalise it and cover it over for a good two kilometres in the centre of the city. This canal had both the advantage of being wider and higher than the sewers, and also, although it joins up with the sewers eventually, of being diluted so less smelly – only five per cent of the water is in fact sewage. Orson Welles nevertheless insisted on perfume being sprayed around before he would go on set. The filming still had to be done with a hand-held camera, by a local Viennese cameraman (who, incidentally, got no credit for his work).

The Third Man is remarkable for the amount of filming done on site: one of the very few studio shots is the famous scene inside the cabin of the Ferris wheel (obviously no tampering with the doors was permissible on the real thing). Measuring 61m in diameter, the Great Wheel, or Riesenrad, is still there today. With its bright scarlet cabins, it towers above the popular amusement park in the Prater, the city's largest public park, and has become a symbol of the Austrian capital. It is hard to imagine the area as Colonel Calloway, the narrator, describes it: "... smashed and desolate and full of weeds, only the Great Wheel revolving slowly over the foundations of merry-go-rounds like



The Ferris wheel towers above the Prater park, a symbol of Vienna

RHPL

abandoned millstones, the rusting iron of smashed tanks which nobody had cleared away..."

The film was made in 1949, while the novel from which this quotation was taken was not published until 1950; but it in fact preceded filming. In his preface, Graham Greene explains that when approached to make a film about post-war Vienna, he knew he was unable to write a bare script without having developed in continuous prose the characterisation, mood and atmosphere. Although he dismisses his work as never having been intended for publication, it makes a remarkably good read, and differs slightly from the film in characters and plot. There is an attention to mood which another scriptwriter might have thought superfluous, as, for example, in the description of the Central Cemetery. Rollo (Holley in the film) searches for Lime's funeral in "a forest where the graves lay like wolves under the trees, winking white eyes under the gloom of the evergreens".

One of the most enchanting fea-

tures of Greene's novel, unfortunately not reproduced in the film, is the use he makes of descriptions of snow and ice. There is barely a chapter without some reference to the icy wind blowing off the Danube, or the bitter, driving snow. At moments, it enhances the suspense: "How quickly one becomes aware of silence even in so silent a city as Vienna with the snow steadily settling..." In the cemetery, it adds both a macabre note – graves had to be dug through the frozen ground with electric drills – and a comic one. "The snow gave the great pompous family headstones an air of grotesque comedy, a toupée of snow slipped sideways over an angelic face, a saint wore a heavy white moustache, and a shako of snow tipped at a drunken angle over the bust of a superior civil servant called Wolfgang Gottman".

Carol Reed and Graham Greene were to prove the perfect team. Reed had worked for 10 years with Alfred Hitchcock. Greene had worked under the famous double agent Kim Philby. What better prepa-

ration for producing a successful Cold War thriller? Greene lived in Vienna for a month collecting material for the book, before moving to Italy to write it up. He must have walked over the whole city, observing details of cafés, night clubs, the macabre ruins, the Viennese enjoying their Sunday morning outings, even the quaint interior of the Josephstadt Theatre – which still has its old-world air today. The cold and daily discomfort of post-war Vienna are also vividly brought home, in both novel and film: the unheated rooms, the ersatz coffee, the military presence bringing with it fear of arrest or kidnap, the ubiquitous black market and racketeering that form the backdrop of the story. As for the idea of the corpse that comes back to life, it had occurred to Greene many years before, though in a London setting, but the author apparently gleaned much of the information on black-market scandals from conversations with people he met while in Vienna, notably a British major who told him about the penicillin racket and a Viennese friend

whose first names, Marc Aurel, were used for the café where Holley waits for Lime before the final chase.

One of the problems Greene posed for Reed was the time that Harry was supposed to whistle whenever he had something on his mind. Reed did not like the orchestral music Greene had envisaged. He wanted something Viennese.

He found a certain Anton Karas who played the zither, but could not read music. Reed persuaded him, despite the man's fear of big cities, to come to London, where he was left watching the film over and over until he turned up with tunes both for Harry and for Anna – the latter known as the Café Mozart theme. In the end, Karas earned enough money with his Harry Lime theme to buy himself a new zither and to set up a *heueriger* – a traditional Viennese wine bar. That, unfortunately, no longer exists.

But there's still plenty of the Viennese local colour Greene describes. The trams will still take you round and round the Ring or out to

FACT FILE

Getting there: The three scheduled airlines linking Britain with Vienna are British Airways (from Gatwick and Heathrow, 0345 222111), Austrian Airlines (from Heathrow, 0171 434 7300) and Lauda Air (from Gatwick and Manchester, 0171 630 5924).

Lauda Air has the lowest fares, quoting £197.60 including tax from Gatwick, £228.60 from Manchester. BA has a fare of £245.60 from London; Austrian charges 40 pence more.

Frequent buses run from the airport to the City Air Terminal and the South and West stations; the rail link from the airport is cheaper but slower.

Staying there: The Austrian National Tourist Office (0171-629 0461) can provide you with lists of hotels. The Independent's travel desk has a soft spot for the Pension Hargita (00 43 1 526 1928), which strikes a good balance between its location at Andreassgasse 1, comfort (spacious) and price (starting at a modest £30 per night for a double room, bathroom and breakfast not included).

the Central Cemetery, past the same rows of stonemasons and market gardeners awaiting clients both dead and alive. Sacher's Hotel, the transit hotel for British officers in Greene's time, where Rollo/Holley was put up all expenses-paid, has returned to its pre-war luxury, though besuited officials are still there in plenty, now from the United Nations (Vienna is the third UN city after New York and Geneva) or OPEC sipping *melange* (coffee with milk) or *einspänner* (black coffee with whipped cream) and eating the famous chocolate *sacher torte*.

The ruined *Kartnerstrasse* in which Calloway stands, unable to imagine the Vienna between the wars, let alone the easy charm of the Strauss era, is again the fashionable shopping street it was.

And between the *Karlplatz* and the *Schwarzenbergplatz* you will find, covered in modern posters and quite unaware of their nostalgic importance, two of the last survivors of those ventilation shafts into which Harry Lime disappeared.

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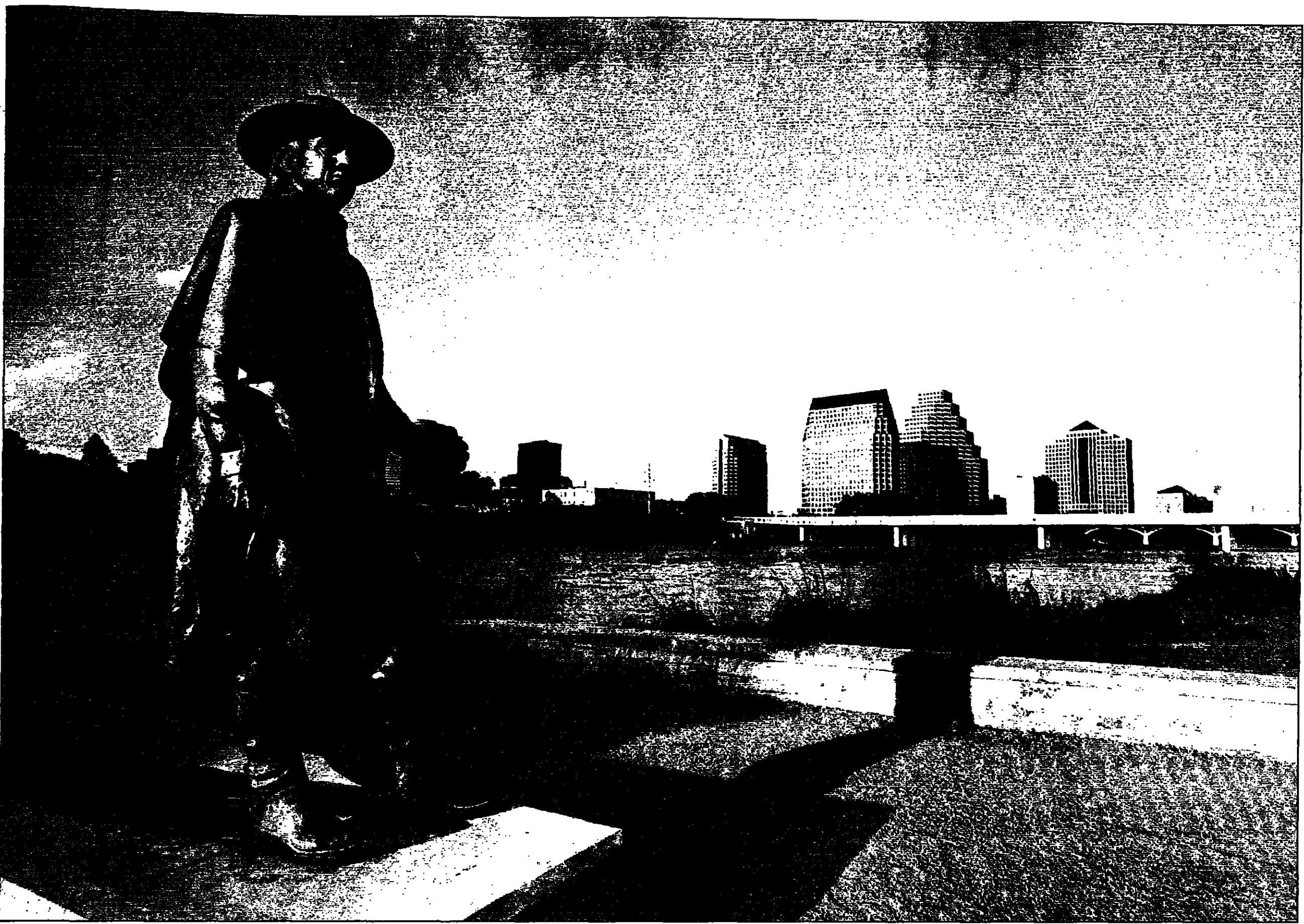
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Statue of blues guitarist Stevie Ray Vaughn on Riverside in the state capital

Robert Francis/Hutchison

Austin – allegro country

Dallas has the soap opera, Houston has the NASA connection, San Antonio is known for its beauty, and, caught inside the triangle that those three conurbations form, is Austin – the hip city of Texas. Although less known than the other three, Austin claims to be the "Live Music Capital of the USA" with about 40 good venues – not bad for a city of fewer than a million people.

Every March, the streets of downtown Austin are filled with punters attending the biggest music industry showcase on the continent, the South-by-South-West Festival. More than 800 acts play in four days and, with a huge proportion of students and recent graduates in town, Austin is favoured by most of the bands on the circuit. It has its own music television show, *Austin City Limits*, and MTV has tapped into the alternative element with its *Austin Stories* sitcom. Compared to the others it may seem the most un-Texan of cities, but then, having a "good-ole" time is a key element of life in the state that lays claim to being on the US's third coast.

Sweeping into Austin on a recent three-hour drive south from Dallas, I worked up a big hunger. This meant getting off the interstate five miles north of downtown Austin to fill up at Threadgill's restaurant on North Lamar Boulevard, an "anywhere USA" strip of gas stations, auto body-repair shops and strip malls.

One of the most famous restaurants in the South, Threadgill's is a kitsch fusion of gingham tablecloths,

Tim Perry goes off the road in Texas to listen to country and see what huge quantities of drugs and beer have done to the locals



Janis Joplin jammed in Austin before finding fame in San Francisco

WSI

only place where you would not get beaten up by the "good-ole boys" for having long hair. It was an oasis, and musicians flocked here.

"The rest of the country called us 'headnecks', that is, people who realised what a combination of huge quantities of marijuana and beer could do," Wilson joked. Other contemporaries would tell me that Austin was the only place where you'd find "big, broad-shouldered arse-kicking hippies".

Today, Wilson continues the Threadgill's tradition of a Wednesday-night session when the place is jammed to the rafters with diners and drinkers (many of them headnecks of old) coming to hear some of the best country talent in Texas.

From Threadgill's, it is a couple of miles down to reach the Drag, a few traffic-clogged blocks of shops providing student services (Tower Records, Taco Bell, etc) on Guadalupe Street, across from the giant University of Texas campus. The Drag was where much of Richard Linklater's 1991 movie, *Slacker*, was filmed. His low-budget hit set the ball rolling for the dumbing down of America long before *Beavis and Butthead* and Hollywood had their say.

From the Drag, it is a short drive over the undulating streets to downtown Austin, a surprisingly bare, sun-bleached space dotted with storefronts that have been unchanged since the Fifties. If you want them, there are tours of the state capital building, but few are here for the conventional tourist sights. People come to Austin to hang out in clubs, listen to live music – and drink.

Bud, Miller and all those beers are virtually ignored here, as locals prefer full-bodied European-style brews such as the locally-produced Celes and Shiner Bock.

Just down from the capitol building is Sixth Street, five blocks of little but clubs and venues. Fifteen years ago, when young Texans such as Nanci Griffith, Lyle Lovett, Steve Earle and Stevie Ray Vaughan were playing the scene, Sixth was a bit quieter. It is now billed by tourist industry folk as some kind of theme park, and it is: walking down here at night I soon collected flyers offering cheap "jello shots" (semi-solidified vodka, in test tubes) to a backdrop of the most predictable house music.

On the edge of this circus of buskers, panhandlers and cops on bikes stands Emo's Alternative Lounge, a fine institution that charges a meagre \$2 cover for the best touring punk bands. Emo's clientele have evolved from the *Slacker* scene by proudly wearing tattoos, facial piercings and hair gel. It is a long way from the Texan image of a cowboy chewing baccy on a horse.

But if you yearn for that old-time scene, that is no problem either. An essential Austin experience, irrespective of whether or not you like country music, is the old-time country dance-hall of the Broken Spoke. Unchanged for decades, the Spoke, with its well-worn hardwood floor, is a friendly joint – until, that is, some out-of-towners try to line dance. It's two-step all the way here, and the menu doesn't stretch much past chicken-fried steak. Apparently, it is good for soaking up beer.

SUMMER FLIGHTS

SIMON CALDER SCANS THE SKIES FOR CUT-PRICE TICKETS TO AMERICA

NEW YORK for £159? Too late, at least for this summer. The absurdly cheap transatlantic fares that were on offer before Easter have been superseded by prices of four or five hundred pounds. But compared with previous summers, seats at discount fares are not as hard to find. Some agents are even whispering of a glut of capacity on the world's busiest international air route, between Heathrow and New York JFK.

For anyone heading to the West Coast this summer, the advice of Jim Green of discount specialist Quest Worldwide (0181-546 6000) is to consider Birmingham and Manchester as departure points. "American Airlines has some good deals on connections from its new Manchester-Dallas flight, and Continental is offering good prices on the Birmingham-Newark-West Coast route."

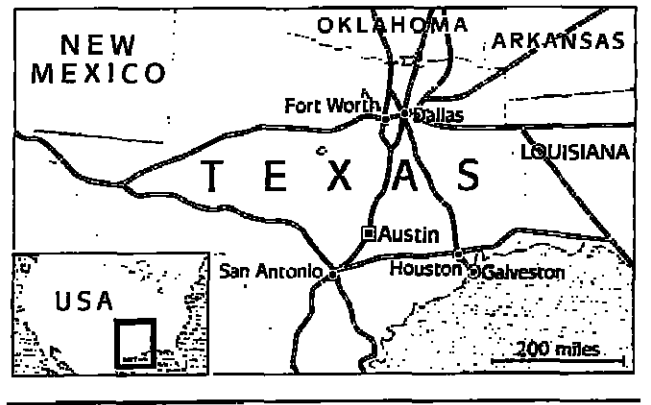
To get the inside track on what fare levels you can expect, I called several agents for their best-value transatlantic flights for specific dates and destinations.

From Glasgow to New York next weekend, travelling out on Friday and back on Monday, Flightbookers (0171-757 3000) quotes British Airways (via London and restricted to certain flights from Heathrow) at £389. This is just £20 more than the comparable Heathrow-JFK fare. From Manchester to Orlando on 1 August, returning a fortnight later, Airline Network (0800 747727) is offering a fare of £459 on Delta via New York. And to reach Los Angeles from London on 15 August for a week, Trailfinders (0171-937 5400) is offering a fare of £570 on Northwest via Detroit.

The principal gateway for most British visitors to the US is New York's Kennedy airport. But JFK is a massively confusing and oppressive airport. It has eight terminals, mainly squalid, scattered around the tacker parts of the Borough of Queens, about 15 miles from Manhattan. Reaching the city from Kennedy can be expensive, and just getting away from the airport takes an age because of the dreadful congestion in front of every terminal. But there are fast alternatives that lock into the subway system.

The cheapest way is to take the free bus marked Long Term Parking, which winds up at the Howard Beach subway station. When it reaches Manhattan it runs the length of the island from south to north. Travelling time: 90 minutes, perhaps twice as much as a cab but for a fraction of the fare: just \$1.50 (under a pound). Children shorter than 3ft 8in travel free.

Travelling out to the airport there is a faster but still economical way: from midtown Manhattan, take the E line to Union Turnpike. Emerging from the subway station, you find a bunch of gypsy cab drivers who will get you along the expressway to Kennedy in minutes, for \$10 (£7). These chaps are mainly Ecuadorian, and I have yet to find an untrustworthy one.



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THE WEEKEND REVIEW
The Independent 4 July 1998

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48 hours in Boston

You need a break – and a short cut to the soul of a city. Each Saturday, 'The Independent' provides a prescription for the perfect long weekend. This week, Sue Fox heads for the home of 'Cheers'

Why go now

Summer means Boston Pops, Chowderfest and the dragon parade in Chinatown during the August Moon Festival. It can be hot and humid, but there are parks, concerts on the Esplanade, harbour cruises, side-walk cafés, and the Charles River to keep you cool. Remember, the writer Mark Twain once remarked, "If you don't like the weather in New England, just wait a minute and it will change."

Beam down

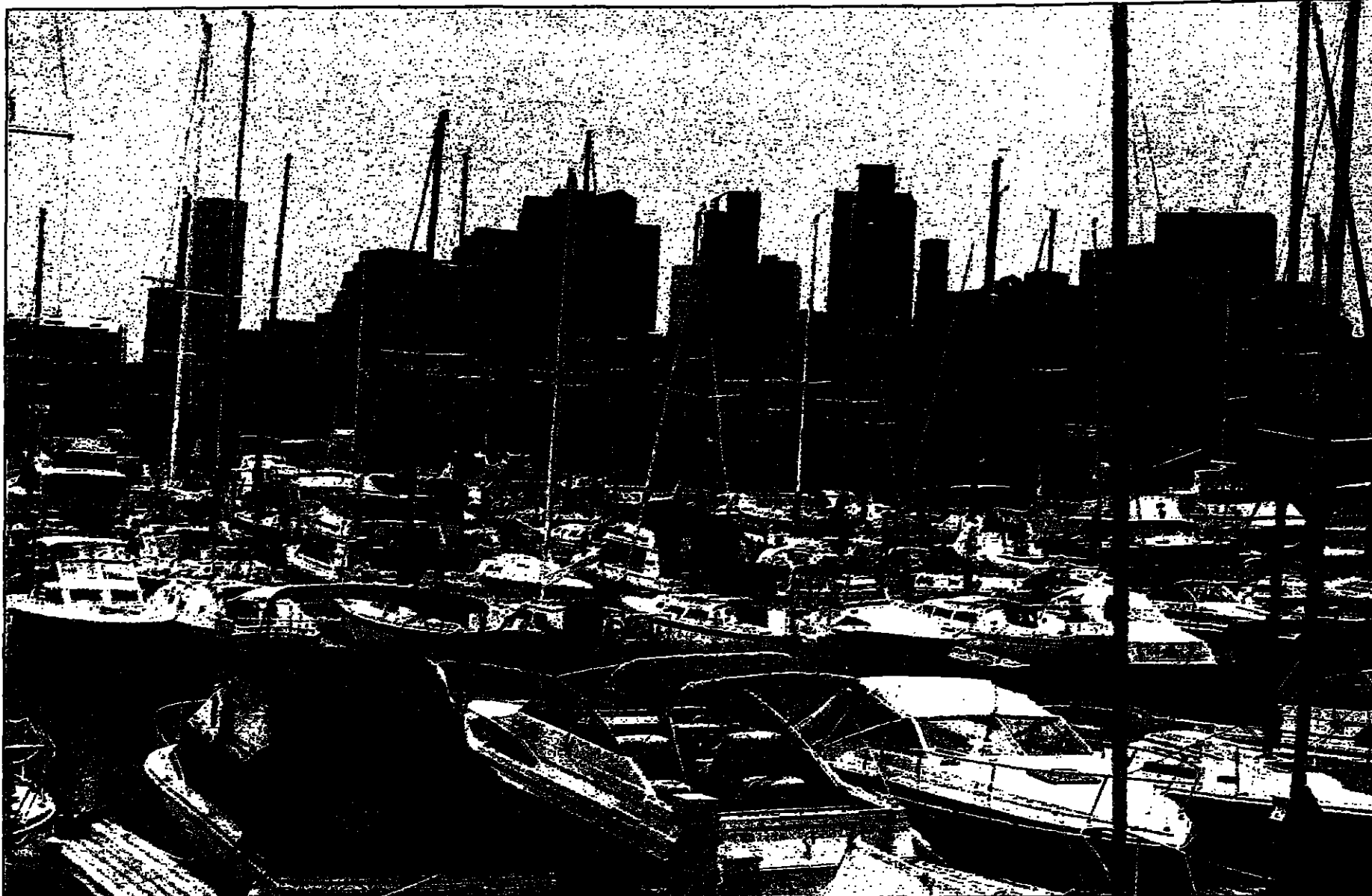
British Airways, American Airlines and Virgin Atlantic fly to Boston from Gatwick and Heathrow. In July and August, even discounted tickets will cost around £450. The cut-price options are on Icelandair from Glasgow and Heathrow (for example through Airline Network, 01772 727727) for around £400; or finding a cheap ticket on an airline such as Air India, El Al or Kuwait Airways to New York and travel by land or air from there.

Get your bearings

Logan International airport is very close to town. One minute you're over water, then, suddenly, Boston's imposing skyline is straight ahead. Logan is being renovated and there are roadworks everywhere, but somehow everything keeps moving. Depending on traffic, downtown Boston is a 20-minute ride. Taxis downtown from the airport average \$15 including tip. Better to take the "T" (short for MBTA, which itself is short for Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority) Blue Line for 85 cents. Free shuttle buses connect the subway station with all airline terminals.

Check in

Hotel desks greet new arrivals at the airport, and can often offer cut-price deals at upmarket hotels. The Seaport Hotel at the World Trade Centre, Boston Harbour, (001 617 385 4000) opened in May. A "Titanic package" includes a room, continental breakfast and two tickets for the Titanic show currently being staged at the hotel. This costs \$189 for a night, with subsequent nights at \$159. You must add 12.45 per cent tax and a \$2 "service charge". For mid-budget, try one of Boston's excellent Bed & Breakfasts and stay in a private home: Bed & Breakfast Agency of Boston (001 617 720 3540). At the bottom of the scale, *The Independent's* travel editor uses and recommends the youth hostel at 11 Hemenway Street (001 617 536 9455), costing \$19 – and with no tax.



Join the party for tea and seafood looking over Boston harbour

Take a walk
Trek the Freedom Trail, a three-mile route of historic sites and a unique cram course in American history. Begin at Boston Common, head for the State House, with its 23-carat gilded dome above Beacon Hill. A few blocks away you'll see Park Street Church – its steeple is considered to be the most beautiful in all of New England. Take in Paul Revere's House, and climb to the top of Bunker Hill Monument. From there take the Charlestown water shuttle, which goes directly to the downtown area.

Lunch on the Run
Faneuil Hall is full of interesting re-

ally-fast-food eateries. In Cambridge, buy a gourmet take-out from Cardullo's, award winning ice-cream from Toscani's, or an American sandwich at Au Bon Pain and watch the chess players and street entertainers in Harvard Square.

Cultural Afternoon
The Museum of Fine Arts (Museum "T"), has the second largest art collection in the US and excellent free walking tours. Harvard (Harvard Square "T") has the Busch-Reisinger, Fogg Art and Arthur M. Sackler museums, as well as the magnificent Widener Library. When

you've done those, spend time browsing in Wordsworth Book Store, before walking down Brattle Street, one of New England's most elegant thoroughfares. Look out for the Leob Drama Centre, home of the American Repertory Theatre (64 Brattle Street) and the Longfellow National Historic Site. (105 Brattle Street), the 1759 Georgian mansion where he penned many of his poetic masterpieces. If you want something more lively, join a mock colonial protest and throw tea chests overboard at the Boston Tea Party Ship and Museum (Congress Street Bridge, South Station "T").

Rousing Dinner
Gastronomically Boston is far more than baked beans. Seafood and chowder are a must. The Union Oyster House (41 Union Street, 001 617 227 2750) is Boston's oldest restaurant; if you're tall, eat downstairs at the bar. For great, authentic Italian food head for the North End and Boston's Little Italy. In summer, the area hosts several patron saint festivals that go on all night. Mamma Maria, (3 North Square, 001 617 523 0077) or Pomodoro, (319 Hanover Street, 001 617 367 4348). For something more romantic, book at the Historic Hasty Pudding Club, (10 Holyoke

Street, Cambridge, 001 617 864 1933).

Sunday Morning

Go to church. Boston has many churches but only one Reverend Peter J. Gomes. Minister at Harvard's Memorial Church (001 617 495 5508). Gomes is one of the best preachers in America. His *The Good Book and Sermons* have been on the *New York Times* best-seller list for months.

Compassion, humour, insight – Gomes has them all. The Christian Science Church Centre (001 617 450 3790) combines an old-world basilica with a sleek office complex de-

signed by IM Pei. For a spiritual sista, sit by the 670 ft reflecting pool in the complex, which has been engineered so that water constantly spills over its inner banks.

Sunday Lunch

If you've been to Harvard Memorial Church, make sure you've made a reservation at Henrietta's Table, Charles Hotel, (Bennet Street 001 617 864 1200), which is always packed. Terrific homey New England fare – American chagrins with garlic mashed potatoes. Buy groceries from Henrietta's market shop and take home a jar of Raspberry Honey Mustard. Maybe you'd prefer a "Traditional Irish Breakfast" at The Purple Shamrock, a lively Irish Pub (One Union Street, 001 617 227 2060), near Faneuil Hall. Tables from 11.30am – 4.00pm. Afterwards, explore Quincy Market and shop till you drop.

A walk in the park

Boston Common's 50 acres is the oldest public park in the US. Start at Beacon Street by the beautifully restored deep-relief bronze commemorating the 54th Massachusetts Regiment, the first Civil War unit made up of free blacks. The famous Frog Pond doesn't have any frogs. In summer, children use it as a wading pool. Stroll in Boston Public Garden and ride one of the famous Swan Boats. Boston by Foot (001 617 367 2345) offers guided 90-minute walks daily, May to October, with trained volunteers (\$7).

Icing on the Cake

Music is a big part of Boston's cultural life. Discover the extraordinary Boston Philharmonic, America's oldest Community orchestra, which celebrates its 20th anniversary next season (September/May). Concerts at the exquisitely restored Jordan Hall, at the New England Conservatory on Saturday evenings, repeated on Sunday afternoons at Sanders Theatre Memorial Hall, Harvard. Boston Philharmonic Orchestra: 617 868 6866.

Find time for at least one movie and a Boston Duck Tour (617 723 3825), on an amphibious truck, including a ride on the Charles River Hunt for great fashion bargains at Fiene's Basement, (426 Washington Street, 617 542 2011). If you want to get out of the city for a couple of hours, catch the Plymouth and Brockton Bus to Hyannis, Cape Cod. It takes two hours and costs \$15 (\$508 746 0378).

Where the grass really is greener

Just because Americans wear their pants on the outside does not mean they are all mad. Chris Walmsley proves it

PREJUDICES and preconceptions: travel attracts them in droves. People's reactions to the news that I intended to travel to New England in the summer rather than in the autumn started me thinking. There were comments such as: "Oh, you want to spend your honeymoon in New England!" Even the travel agent's pencil-line eyebrows twitched at the notion that a honeymoon couple did not want to spend their first hours of married life under a sunshade with a trashy novel on the sun-drenched beaches of the Indian Ocean, the Caribbean or the Costa Blanca.

"New England – in June? But we went in the fall," was another incredulous remark, as if the only conceivable reason for visiting New Hampshire and Vermont were to witness the spectacle of the autumn leaves.

Preconceptions are dangerous creatures. My first impressions of the US were formed almost entirely from watching imported TV programmes and Hollywood films, and from hearsay. They were set rigid a long time before I set foot in the country. After three weeks in the six New England states, and 2,000 miles of driving, many of those false impressions had been blown to smithereens and replaced with a whole load of new ones. OK, so I didn't think that all Americans wore Mickey Mouse ears and that all their food came from the "kill it, fry it and stick it in a bun" school of cookery, but my preconceptions were just as misplaced. Here they are.

■ Two thirds of Americans are "mad". I am sure I read this somewhere and supposed, without thinking much about it, that it must be true. But not so. The Americans I

spoke to were highly civilised and courteous people. A cynic might say that shopkeepers have their commercial interests at heart when they welcome tourists into their shops, but nearly everyone – including sales assistants, waiters, museum staff, hotel receptionists and locals who were asked to give directions, were cheerful and friendly and initiated conversations as if it were the most natural thing. Compare that with "old" England; over here we are living proof that it takes 466 muscles to be friendly to a stranger and only five to come across as totally indifferent.

■ Americans are "stupid". No more than the other 5.4 billion people on this planet – although I do have to mention the small boy at Boston's New England Aquarium. He stood transfixed by a furry, oblong creature moving up and down the inside of a display tank. "Wow, look at that one," he marvelled. "Come away, Alex," said his teacher. "It's a trush. They're cleaning the glass".

■ Americans just love the English. I cannot remember how many times I have heard people say, when they have travelled around the US, that Americans invited them into their homes and praised their charming English accents. Well, it did not happen to me. In New England they love all things Scottish and Irish, and a bitter experience taught me that there is no similar love affair with the English.

The experience took place on Cape Cod, as we set out our pitch on a beach near Barnstable Harbour. A lady who looked like a younger version of Nancy Reagan asked what we were doing sitting on the beach, presumably because the sky

was slightly overcast, and it was not the height of the season.

"We're English," we told her, and she made a choking sound as though someone had choked her across the throat. We took this to be a gesture of contempt. Nancy then turned to her husband imperiously and said, "Didn't we have a marvellous time in Scotland last year?" Needless to say, we weren't invited back to their place for tea.

■ Americans eat big portions and food is dirt cheap. Anyone who has been to America will tell you this. Whether the general rule applies to New England is debatable. (The first New Englander I ever met was from Newport, Rhode Island and no one ever saw her eat anything more calorific than a lettuce leaf.) Most restaurants I looked at charged the same price in dollars as a London restaurant charges in sterling. The day we were served up perfect 14oz fillet mignon steaks in béarnaise sauce (and French beans, fries and Caesar salad) for \$14.95 was the day we decided we should move to America. When our waiter, who was called Jay, came over and said the meals were on special offer at \$6.99 we fell to the floor and begged him to take us home with him.

■ Americans drive everywhere. The car rental agent told us: "It's ready for you in bay 37. Our courtesy bus will take you there. Enjoy." The courtesy bus stopped in front of bay 35 for a man from Colorado, despite a lot of pleading and hand-waving on our part, the driver forced us back into our seats and drove another four metres. Only then did he let us off.

■ Pants. Of course, everyone knows that Americans wear their pants on



Americans like water too

the outside. Look at Superman. However much you prepare for the small number of language differences across the Atlantic, it is still slightly disconcerting when a man comes up to you in Freeport and says: "Hey, Nice pants. Did you get them at LL Bean?" I feared the worst: my flies must be open. But the truth was he genuinely liked my M&S moleskin jeans.

■ American TV is dreadful. I had an open mind on the question of American television – until, that is, I tuned into the New Hampshire Public Television Service. Their sched-

ule comprised hours of appeal for donations interspersed with a special feature programme on an aspect of New Hampshire life and a dubbed-in message along the lines of: "If you want to see more programmes like this, please call us now with your donation." The feature programme that caught my attention considered the lighthouses of New Hampshire. (New Hampshire has a tiny coastline, which made the programme all the more tragic.)

■ The British are obsessed with the weather like nobody else. Wrong. This is a popular misconception for-

sign visitors have about us. Take the Americans and their 24-hour weather channel. Like everything else in America, the weather is big. Their weather programme broadcasts an interminable litany of reports about storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, blizzards, humidity and searing heat – all on the same forecast.

There was a report that 10 inches of rain had fallen in Boston (while we were sitting on the beach at Cape Cod huddled together under a small patch of blue sky). When we returned to our room and switched on the weather channel, we watched a few good people of Boston harping on

about the mayor's failure to prevent six feet of water entering their basements.

"You stupid idiots," I shouted at the TV set. "You've just had the worst rains since 1870. It's not the mayor's bloody fault that you're all drowning." Suddenly the feel-good factor that had carried me for two-and-a-half weeks had gone, and I was the same miserable, cantankerous old sod that I am at home.

■ Americans are insecure about their short history. I have heard this theory expounded on many occasions and it is wrong, wrong, wrong. Staff at the Shelburne Museum in Vermont, at Mystic Seaport and the USS Nautilus in Connecticut, at the Shaker village at Hancock, at Plymouth Plantation, and at every other goddamn museum and art gallery we visited in the six New England states introduced themselves to visitors and talked informatively about whichever piece of history they were curating.

Americans have 360 years or so of colonial and modern history; it is hugely significant, and they have made it accessible and interesting. Where else in the world could you wander through the back woods of a state and find an free-entry gallery and art library (the Sterling and Francine Clark Institute) with works by Degas, Monet, Manet, Renoir, Cézanne, and Renaissance artists on public display, and be handed a programme at the entrance by a smiling art student?

I can't think of a 10th generalisation but, speaking as a recently-enlightened traveller, I was struck by New England's tourist trail as the acme of good quality: motorists in Boston stop to let you cross the road; the price of petrol (a dollar a gallon) could make you hysterical; people say "Hi" to strangers, and the grass really is greener (I have some photographs of lawns in Woodstock and Kennebunkport to prove it).

TRAVEL

THRILLS AND SPILLS ON THE OPEN SEA 23 • THE BRESSE CHICKEN TAKES A BOW 27

Between a croc and a hard place

Diving among wrecks and reptiles tops the bill in the Solomons, says Paul Samuels

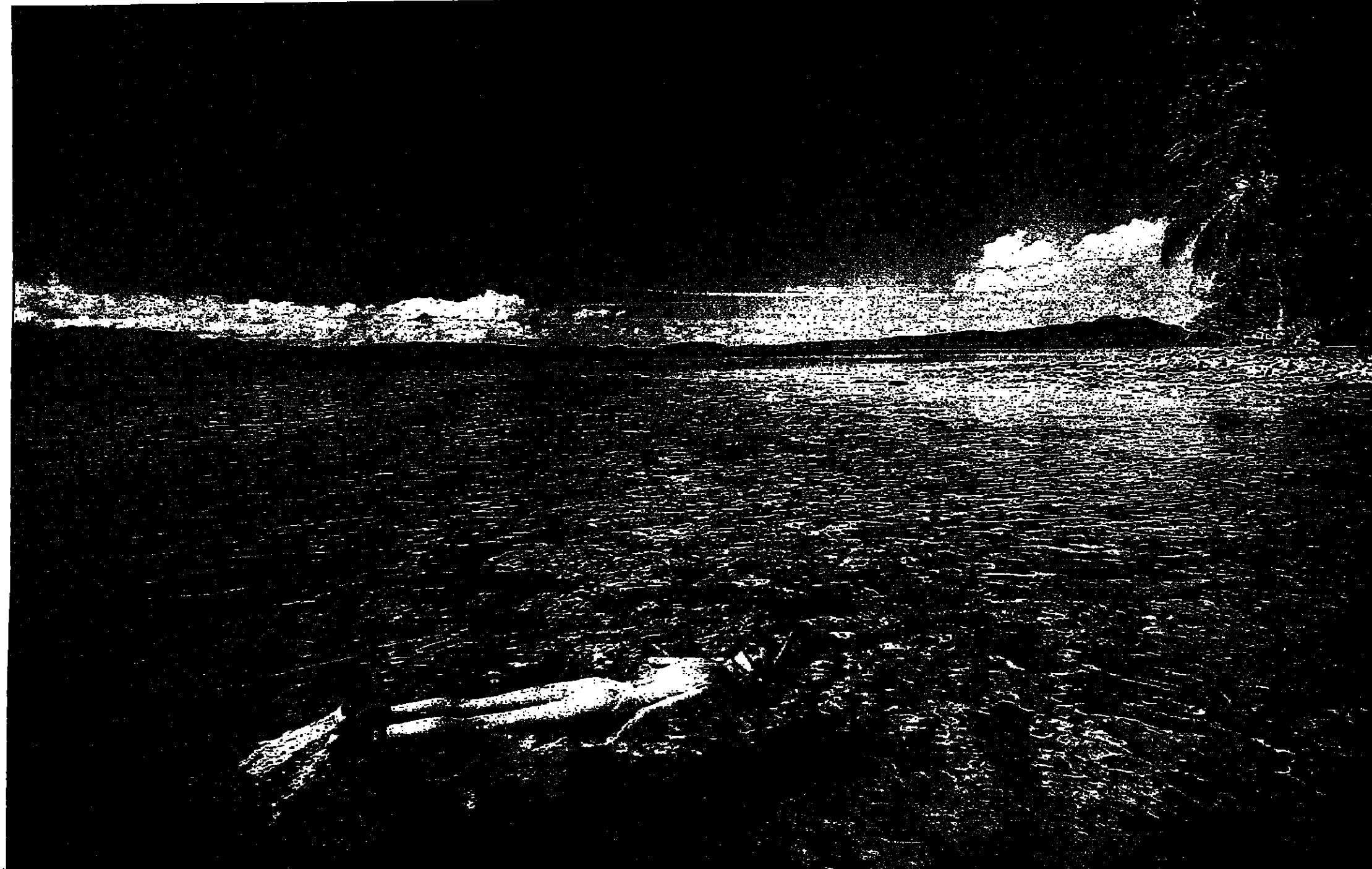
As the aircraft swings over the Solomons' Western Province, the island chain seems to have just popped up from the Pacific. Geologically speaking that is exactly what happened, although nowadays the islands' green splashes of rainforest are encircled by white, sandy beaches. The turquoise of the coral reef abruptly changes to darker blue as the sea floor plunges to depths that, frankly, are best not thought about in an 18-seater aircraft that is about to land on a grass strip. Seghe Airport's facilities consist of a hut, a radio and a man who chases football-playing children off the runway as the aircraft lands.

The Michi villagers are developing sustainable tourism with the Worldwide Fund for Nature to provide income, so that they are not pressurised into selling land rights to logging companies. In the Solomon Islands resorts are small. Vanua Rapita caters for 12 people in three palm-thatch huts that perch on stilts. The villagers paddle over in dugout canoes to prepare guests' meals. Activities include snorkelling, crocodile-spotting and trips up river where tree roots claw into the water and parrots appear as vivid flashes of colour in the tree canopy.

Gizo has banks, plenty of accommodation, restaurants and a market. It is also the base for two diving companies. The Solomon Islands have some of the world's finest diving and snorkelling sites. Second World War wrecks have been colonised by myriad fish and corals that are still unspoilt.

It is exciting just to be on a dive boat, watching the dolphins, and to be dropped off on deserted islands such as Kennedy Island - where JFK and his crew stayed after their torpedo boat was rammed. The slow pace of a tropical climate makes operations such as internal flights an experience. Before each flight our luggage and then we ourselves were weighed on huge scales. The pilot would then refuse to take off until an extra 20 kilos had been unloaded - and passengers would argue about whose bag of sweet potatoes had to wait for the next flight.

Bellona's inhabitants call it

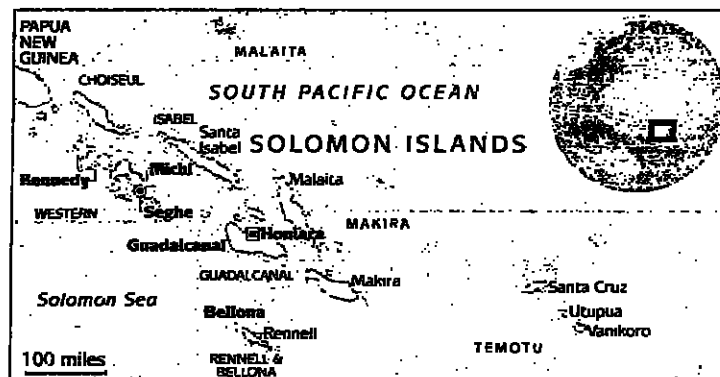


Snorkelling in Marovo Lagoon in the Solomon Islands, whose teeming coral reefs and Second World War wrecks offer some of the finest subaqua sites in the world

Louise Murray/RHDP

"Paradise Island". More literal people would call it a narrow, flat-bottomed crater. It is only 15km square, with steep cliffs tumbling into the sea, and has two excellent and deserted beaches. Transport is by daily tractor along a single track. With no electricity, the stars appear amazingly bright.

The cave "resort" at the southernmost tip of the island, has beds for eight people and bucket showers. It is a magical place. We slept in caves halfway down a sheer cliff face. It was really like being at the edge of the world, although warm, dry beds and regular deliveries of meals stopped us getting too carried away with flat-earth theories. The staple foods - fish, cassava, and paw-paw - are wrapped in leaves



and cooked in a pit, or motu. Each region has its own language, so islanders use pidgin English to communicate outside their own wotoks (derived from "one talk"). Because of its logic and

choice of words, this is easier to understand than to use. It is dramatic, as if the language were developed by nine-year-old boys, eg "shoot" in pidgin means "throw", "kill" means "hit".

Guadalcanal rises steeply to mountainous, impenetrable rainforest. Honiara, the Solomons' capital, is 16km from Henderson Airport. It is a dusty strip of development along the coast road, with unmade tracks snaking down from the hills and the suburbs of home-built houses. Honiara has hotels, two night-clubs and at Bannig beach, on the outskirts, a partially submerged war wreck, now a living wall of soft coral 10 metres from shore.

Though the outside world is encroaching, 20 years after achieving independence the Solomons are proving to be resilient. Beneath a Coca-Cola sign at Amy's Snack Bar, we drank milk straight from the coconut.

FACT FILE

When to go: The dry season begins around the end of April and continues until early November.

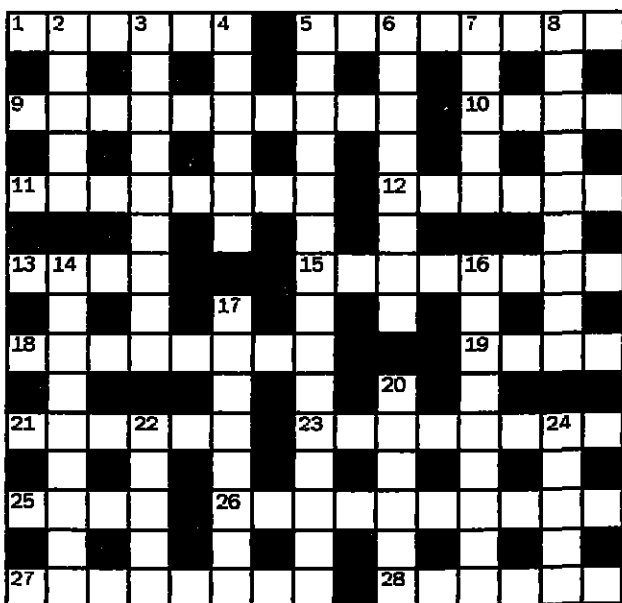
How to get there: First travel to Brisbane, for £500 or less if you fly within the next couple of weeks on an airline such as Royal Brunei, booked through a discount agent. From Brisbane, the national carrier, Solomon Airlines, will take you to the capital Honiara for around £280 return if you book in advance. The airline's UK office is at Hunter House, Biggin Hill Airport, Biggin Hill, Kent TN16 3BN (01959 540737).

Who to ask: Solomon Airlines will dispense advice, as will the Solomon Islands Honorary Consulate, 19 Springfield Road, London SW19 7AL (0181-296 0232).

THE SATURDAY CROSSWORD

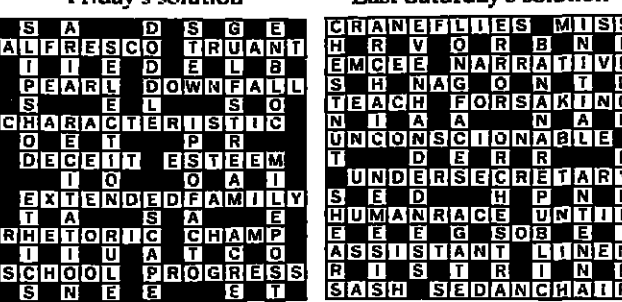
No. 3654. Saturday 4 July

By Phil



Friday's solution

Last Saturday's solution



ACROSS

- 1 Support the Spanish in drive (6)
- 5 Went to the other side, being unwanted (4-4)
- 9 English funny about working without incurring undue cost (10)
- 10 True German playwright (not British) (4)
- 11 Ray's changed rent in part of Scotland (8)
- 12 Shock for all to see in a market in recession (6)
- 13 Mozart symphony encountered in some hall in Zagreb (4)
- 15 A child tracks some soldiers (5)
- 18 Trial started - nothing going wrong (4,4)
- 19 Unruffled University river into which student has fallen (4)
- 21 Bargain lot stocked by firm (6)
- 23 Seems upset with Alf, just as before (8)
- 25 Control grave's first inscription... (4)
- 26 ...graven data reinterpreted for a modern audience (5-5)
- 27 In which brief comments are couched? (8)
- 28 Colour returned in grass in a good period? (6)

DOWN

- 2 Old boxer likely to hit the deck? (5)
- 3 A possible synonym of "small beer"? (4-5)
- 4 It's an annoying child in a hat, that's clear (6)
- 5 How ice-cream may be treated and conditioned? (6,4,5)
- 6 Fat man seen with river workers? (8)
- 7 End-point in home game (5)
- 8 Diseased maple here will be dying soon (9)
- 14 Train using club and vaulting equipment (4-5)
- 16 Ready if needed? (9)
- 17 Engagement about to fail, after reflection, leaving one abandoned (8)
- 20 Grab the eggs (6)
- 22 A high point, getting first in History - a good mark (5)
- 24 Inhabitant of ancient kingdom, a Greek heroine (5)

The first five correct solutions to this week's puzzle opened next Thursday receive hardbacked copies of the Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. Answers and winners' names will be published next Saturday. Send solutions to Saturday Crossword, P.O. Box 4018, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5BL. Please use the box number and postcode and give your own postcode. Last week's winners: T Buckridge, Carlworth 1; Greston, Staines; J Greston, Swans; D Blackman, Tetney; D Fielding, London E1.

A train

"While a desperately poor railway, FCC in Cuba certainly has no intention of going without a struggle, despite the complete lack of spare parts for locomotives and until recently a serious lack of fuel" - so reports the new edition of the Thomas Cook Overseas Timetable, published this week at £8.40. But one correspondent complains about a Cuban train that arrived more than 10 hours late on a journey of under 100 miles.

A boat

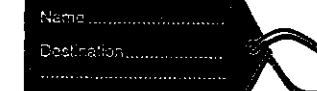
Beirut is now more easily accessible from Cyprus. Louis Cruise Lines (0171-383 2882) has begun to operate weekly cruises from Cyprus. The vessel sails overnight on Fridays from the port of Limassol, giving a full day in the Lebanese capital. The lowest fare, for an aircraft-type seat, is £56, rising to £183 for a suite. An optional excursion to Byblos costs £19 (these fares are in Sterling, not Cypriot pounds). The service runs until the end of October.

A plane

Norway, Europe's northernmost country, is also one of the most expensive. To cut travelling costs, the summer air pass from Braathens (0191-214 0991) provides cheap flights.

The Visit Norway ticket costs £55 a sector for short journeys, £110 for long trips -

CHECK IN



and only an extra £8/£16 for business class.

Short flights are defined as those either wholly north or south of a line through Trondheim; a long flight is one which crosses this line. The pass is valid until the end of September. The cheapest Braathens ticket at present from Newcastle to either Stavanger or Bergen costs £165.

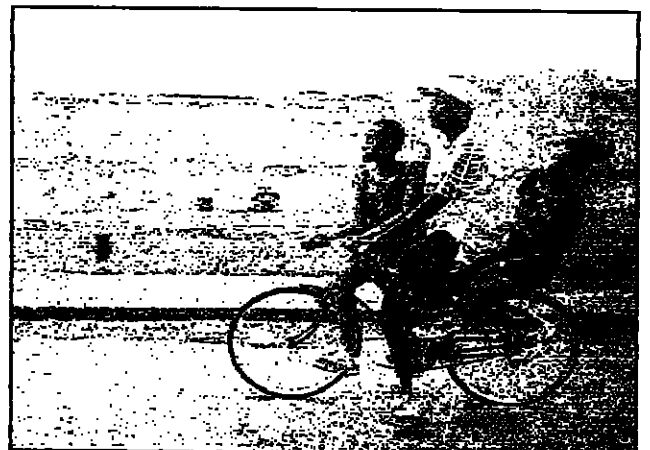
A room

Hotels that rely mainly upon business travellers are busy

cutting their rates for summer, in order to appeal to the leisure market.

Travelodge is offering a room in certain of its properties for just £29.95 a night; this covers up to two adults and two children under 12. You must book in advance on 0800 850950 - by 10 July for a visit on or before 29 July.

The Holiday Inn group (0800 897121) has a rate of £32 per room, per night at properties from Braintree to Bolton, plus a similar rate at some hotels worldwide, including Reims.



In Cuba, it may be faster to go by bicycle

Madrid and Muscat. This deal applies until 12 September.

A meal
Free pizzas, or at least vouchers valid in Pizza Hut restaurants, are among the many incentives being offered to travel agents by car rental companies.

Suncars is offering the meal voucher for every booking, while Alamo is countering with £20 in Marks & Spencer vouchers. With so many incentives for agents, The Independent advises would-be renters to shop around.

A drink

For those who believe that there is no such thing as a good cup of inflight coffee, first and business class on Qantas now feature an in-flight espresso machine.

A week from now...

AB Airlines (0800 458 8110) will have begun flying from Gatwick to Nice, with a lead-in fare of £109 return. The move intensifies the competition between airlines flying to the Côte d'Azur. Debonair (0541 500300) and easyJet (0870 600 0000) compete daily from Luton; easyJet also flies from Liverpool.

British Airways (0345 222111) and British Midland (0345 554554) operate to Nice from Heathrow, the latter flying also on behalf of Air France (0181-742 6600). And Virgin Express (0800 891199) offers good deals from Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted via Brussels to Nice.

PREJUDICE
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TODAY'S TELEVISION APPEARS IN THE SEPARATE LISTINGS GUIDE

صباح من الامل

YOUR MONEY

PERSONAL FINANCE NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

PERSONAL FINANCE • MOTORING • PROPERTY

Funds win on a shake of the dice

Secretive fund managers are playing a game with high stakes.

By Paul Slade

Insurance companies and fund management firms are there to invest our savings for us and deliver good returns on our behalf. Sometimes, their efforts go much further.

In the case of three top fund managers - Scottish Widows, Jupiter, and Mercury Asset Management - their activities have extended to lobbying the Government over the taxes it levies on casinos.

The companies' intervention - which they are wary about discussing in public - is not motivated by a bizarre wish to protect secret gambling at their own establishments. Rather, it is to safeguard the profits, and therefore the share price, of the casino operators in which they invest.

The unit trust companies became involved in the fight because they are or have been big investors in the UK's two biggest casino operators, London Clubs and Capital Corporation. Mercury Asset Management, for example, owns 19.4 per cent of London Clubs and 12.6 per cent of Capital Corporation. Jupiter's £840m income unit trust also holds shares in one, or both, of the two operators - although the company will not give details on the size of its holdings.

Scottish Widows held London Clubs shares before the Budget, but has since sold them. Until it did so, London Clubs shares accounted for 0.8 per cent of the company's £280m high-income trust and the same proportion of its Balanced Income Trust.

The life company's with-profits fund, which holds money invested by Scottish Widows life insurance and pension customers, held 0.08 per cent of its funds in London Clubs shares.

The origins of these tactics lay in the Chancellor Gordon Brown's belief that UK casinos - particularly those in London - are not paying enough tax. In his March Budget, the Chancellor acted to put this right.

The tax each casino pays depends on

its gross gaming yield. This is the amount the casino takes in bets, minus the amount it pays out in winnings, and averages about £1 for every £5 staked.

Mr Brown's proposal was to increase the top rate of tax that casinos pay from 33.3 per cent to 40 per cent, and to reduce the threshold points at which each new band comes in.

However, this would have created a huge gap between the 25 per cent and 40 per cent bands, which the gaming industry argued was unfair to medium-sized casinos. Under Mr Brown's proposals, casinos with a gross gaming yield of £5m to £12m - modest by London standards - would have borne the brunt of the extra tax.

Scottish Widows, Jupiter and Mercury feared that their own clients - including thousands of small savers - would suffer from the proposed tax hike. They lobbied heavily for a change to Mr Brown's proposals and managed to get their amendment through last Tuesday as part of the Finance Bill's report stage.

They argued also that the tax increases which the Chancellor wanted risked driving casino operators offshore or encouraging the growth of illegal gambling. In either case, casino operators would have escaped UK tax.

The unit trust companies that pushed the amendment through are strangely reluctant to discuss their triumph. Scottish Widows refused to comment on the issue at all, despite repeated requests to do so. An executive from one of the other two companies said he was "delighted" at the change, but gave even this brief view only on condition that he remained anonymous.

A Customs & Excise spokesman said: "We've accepted that part of their case has merits, hence the change. The basic thesis of the Government - that the gaming industry can afford to pay more tax - still holds, and they will pay more tax. But it will be the larger casinos, particularly in London, that will bear the brunt of the change."



Unit trust companies have lobbied hard to cut gaming taxes on roulette

nos, particularly in London, that will bear the brunt of the change.

"As turnover gets higher, more and more of it becomes straight profit, and that is where the tax goes up."

Dawn Primarolo, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, says: "The amendment ensures that over two-thirds of casinos will pay no more duty than they did prior to the Budget."

No casino, in fact, will pay any more than it would have done under the original Budget proposals.

The Treasury claims that its loss of revenue from the change is too small to show up under its customary habit of rounding all figures to the nearest £5m.

Others are not so sure, and say that the Treasury figures underestimate the amount that would have been raised if Mr Brown's original proposals had gone through.

The Treasury raised about £80m from casino gaming duty in 1996 and 1997. The Budget changes, as now amended, will add about £25m this year, it claims.

Investors in the Mercury, Scottish Widows and Jupiter funds will barely notice any change, but the lobbying efforts of their fund managers will probably have saved them a few pounds on their portfolios.

Enough for a quick punt on the 2.40 at Wincanton, perhaps.

Customs on a roll as game duty bites

LONDON CASINOS pay more than 80 per cent of all the casino gaming duty paid in the country. They benefit from foreign visitors' gambling in London because most big gamblers will play in the capital.

In 1996-97 about £2.3bn was staked in UK casinos. Of this sum, 81 per cent was returned to punters in winnings, leaving a total gross gaming yield of about £450m.

There are 116 casinos in the UK, including 21 in London. On these figures, the average gross gaming yield for a London casino is about £17m a year, and the average for a provincial casino is about £950,000.

Under the Chancellor's original proposals, the average provincial casino would have paid tax of £78,750, but will now pay only £73,750. The average London casino would have paid £8.15m, but will now pay just £5.98m.

The original Budget proposals would have taxed casinos at 25 per cent on the gross gaming yield above £1.4m, with the remainder being taxed at 40 per cent.

The amended Finance Bill envisages a more gradual rise: the first £1.45m gaming yield will be taxed at 2.5 and 12.5 per cent, followed by a tax of 20 per cent on the next £1m, 30 per cent on the next £1.75m and 40 per cent thereafter.

Apart from investors in the fund managers' unit trusts, another group of winners from the change are Britain's gamblers, as the cost of the extra tax was likely to be passed on to them anyway.

They could probably do with a change of luck.

Telegraph Colour Library

Safety net for homebuyers

A package of reforms should make chartered surveyors more accountable. By Nic Cicutti

A NEW complaints handling system for homebuyers and sellers was launched this week by chartered surveyors, with the promise that it will be fair, open and impartial.

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) is introducing a package of reforms to give clients more confidence in the profession.

Among the reforms coming into effect will be a requirement for surveyors in private practice to set up an in-house complaints handling procedure. If both parties agree, external mediation can be used. For complaints made after September 1 this year, RICS members will have to submit to arbitration if clients demand it.

The RICS' disciplinary system is also to be strengthened, giving the organisation the power to fine its members up to £5,000 if they are found to be in breach of its rules of conduct. The RICS' disciplinary board will also have a layperson - who is not a chartered surveyor - sitting on it.

Peter McKendrick, president of RICS, said: "The volume of surveying services provided to clients by chartered surveyors is vast and only a tiny proportion goes wrong. But by making these changes to our

rules, this profession is showing its absolute support and determination for an open, fair and impartial system for dealing with problems that arise."

Mr McKendrick adds that clients should always seek a solution to the complaint with the surveyor himself before going to arbitration.

The new system, which has been in gestation for several years, follows complaints by members of the public about the inability of the chartered surveyors' trade body to deal with its members' errors in

the course of their work.

Four years ago, *The Independent* highlighted the case of a female housebuyer, who subsequently featured on TV. She had bought a house which was subsequently discovered to have major damp problems, which cost many thousands of pounds to repair. Her surveyors failed to spot the problem.

Legal experts advised that even if the surveyor was found to be negligent by a court, compensation might be hard to win because the cost of repairs was less than 10 per cent of the

home's total value. A court might find this an "acceptable" margin of error.

Critics of the RICS have called for an independent ombudsman to be appointed to deal with complaints against surveyors from members of the public rather than the present system of voluntary arbitration, soon to be made compulsory.

However, Mr McKendrick said: "We are confident that with this new system in place, chartered surveyors' clients will be able to address complaints more easily and, where [it] is not resolved by the firm, the expense of going to court may be removed by going through the route of arbitration."

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A STRANGE sense of boredom strikes me when I read *Which?* nowadays.

The reason may be that the flagship magazine of the Consumers' Association has drifted into the habit of repackaging old news and presenting it as the fruit of its own research.

Such was my reaction to this month's edition, whose banner headline "Scandal of the City" revealed "facts" we've binged on about for years.

Which? argues that holders of personal pensions face heavy initial and annual management charges on their funds, particularly when compared to company schemes.

Had the magazine's staff done their work properly, they could have examined the precise way in which charges are applied, as we have done at *The Independent*, and warned its readers how to spot and avoid the rip-offs.

They could have pointed out that one reason why charges on occupational pensions are lower – and, therefore, why performance is higher – is because fund managers there are not required to deal with tens or even hundreds of thousands of separate individual accounts.

Occupational schemes also cost their members less because employers are usually prepared to pay a proportion of the management charges.

As for extra-heavy fees levied on top-up pension payments, or AVCs, of course company-provided ones are cheaper than private ones.

That said, if you plan to retire earlier than the company allows, want your investment to have an ethical dimension, or simply want a different choice than that offered by the in-house scheme, it is perfectly legitimate to look outside to so-called "free-standing" AVCs. Yet none of that appears in *Which?*

The financial services industry has been involved in one scandal after another in the last few years. The service given to millions of hapless punters is abysmal. Charges are terrible.

My worry when I read ill-researched regurgitations of old facts is that companies



NIC CICUTTI
'Scandal of the City' revealed 'facts' we've binged on about for years

that really offend may be left off the hook. Discussions about what can be done to improve matters are then no longer based on serious factual argument, but on sterile and ancient jibes.

It is sad to see a publication which in its heyday was a byword for serious research turning into such a sensationalist rag.

THE ROYAL Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) this week published a new complaints system for clients who feel that they have been let down by the profession.

At best, these reforms are a vague improvement on the appalling treatment meted out to home-buyers in recent years.

Four years ago, this paper wrote about a reader whose surveyor had failed to spot serious damp problems in the house she intended to buy. The cost of repairs was eventually more than £7,000. Yet the surveyor avoided having to pay compensation because of a legal technicality.

Unless the damage meant the house was worth at least 10 per cent less than the purchase price (up to 20 per cent if there were no comparable properties in the area), the surveyor could claim this was within an acceptable margin of error.

Ultimately, only a totally independent ombudsman, able to sift evidence and reach decisions without pressure from surveyors themselves, will meet home-buyers' needs.

At this rate, unfortunately, it will take the RICS another 40 years to deliver.

Acting for the future

FINANCIAL MAKEOVER

NAME: CATHY HARRIS. AGE: 37

OCCUPATION: COMMUNICATIONS SKILLS TRAINING ORGANISER

Cathy has a great deal of experience running training programmes. After being made redundant in 1993 she decided to use part of her redundancy payment to fund a year at drama school.

She has since put her acting skills to good use by making her training courses interactive and using drama techniques to encourage more effective communications.

As she has become more successful her income has grown and she now feels able to start investing for her future.

The adviser: Vivienne Starkey is a senior consultant at Hadcock Porter Williams, independent financial advisers, Peak House, 20 Eastcheap, London, EC3M 1LQ (0171-283 3337).

The advice: Cathy would like a complete overhaul of her financial position, including savings, investment and planning for retirement. She has recently sold a half-share in a property and is currently renting; however, she would like to purchase a home in the near future.

As she is self-employed, she feels that she should consider protecting her income in case she is unable to work because of ill-health. She has not made a will. She would also like to move towards ethical investments.

Cathy banks with the Nationwide; she keeps a low balance in her current account and uses an interest-bearing Cash-builder account to hold her working capital along with her savings.

She should consider holding her own savings in a separate account; this will simplify her accounting procedure and allow her to take advantage of higher interest rates offered by postal or notice accounts.

Cheltenham & Gloucester currently offers 7.25 per cent on any balance over £1,000, with its Instant Transfer account.

This is a telephone-operated account – an added advantage for busy people. Regular saving into a separate account to cover her income tax liability avoids a shortfall on the due dates, and it will also benefit



Cathy tunes into a means of keeping her money tax efficient

Nicola Kurtz

from higher rates of interest.

Cathy should consider tax-efficient savings and investments, and could begin with a Tax Exempt Special Savings Account (Tessa) for her medium-term savings. The interest is tax-free as long as the capital is not touched over a five-year period.

She could invest £3,000 in the first year, £1,800 on years two to four, and between £600 and £1,800 in the fifth year – a total of £9,000.

Tessas will not be available after April 1999, when they will be replaced by the new Individual Savings Account (ISA). However, any Tessa opened before then will be allowed to continue.

When the Tessa matures in five years' time, Cathy can roll the amount deposited (not the interest) into an ISA without affecting the annual allowance. Several building societies, including the Bradford & Bingley and Norwich & Peterborough, are currently offering 8 per cent variable interest rates on Tessas.

Cathy is now in a position to invest for the medium-to-long term and should consider putting £6,000 into a Personal Equity Plan (PEP) for the tax year 1998-1999. This will allow her investment to grow free of income and Capital Gains Tax (CGT).

She understands that an equity-based investment should be seen as part of her longer-

term strategy; over the medium term equities should provide a better return than bank or building society accounts. The PEP could be used later to help repay a mortgage or to provide tax-free income in retirement.

As Cathy has expressed an interest in ethical investments, she could consider either NPI Global Care or Jupiter Ecology for her PEP. Both have a good performance record and offer some international exposure.

Pension planning is already in hand, and Cathy is making the maximum allowance contributions into her existing Scottish Widows personal pension plan. She has made use of the "carry forward" facility which allows her to make up unused tax relief for previous years.

She made sure that the plan she chose was extremely flexible, allowing her to take contribution holidays and early retirement without penalty. She should add "waiver of prem-

ium" benefit to this pension, so that the regular contributions continue if she is unable to work because of ill-health.

As Cathy is self-employed she should take out permanent health insurance (PHI), which will pay her a tax-free income if she is unable to work following illness. The payments would then continue until she can either return to work or start to receive her pension. An income of £1,000 per month deferred for six months would cost about £30 per month.

Whereas PHI protects income, critical illness cover protects the person. On diagnosis of a specified condition, a tax-free lump sum is paid. The money can be used to cover medical costs, modifications to the home, or nursing care. It could also be used to clear any debts, such as a mortgage.

Statistics show that one in five women and one in four men will contract a critical illness during their working lives, yet

relatively few people take out this type of cover.

To provide lifelong £100,000 cover, premiums start at £29 per month. However, they are reviewed after 10 years and could increase substantially.

Taking out a mortgage can be problematical for self-employed people, though many reputable lenders are willing to consider making a loan on their variable rate without having seen three years' accounts. They will need to be confident that the repayments can be made, and will accept a letter from an accountant.

The amount of the deposit available will also be considered and if 25 per cent of the value of the property is available, the more attractive fixed or discounted rates can apply.

Finally, Cathy should make a will, to choose how her possessions and property should be distributed when she dies, rather than leaving the choice to someone else.

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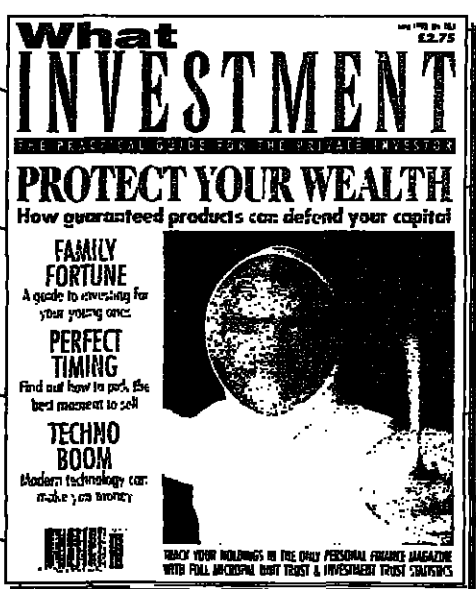
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BARCLAYLOAN is offering up to £1m in cash prizes as part of a scratchcard promotion. Customers who apply for a loan up to August 31 can take part, with top prizes of up to £10,000. Details from branches.

ABBEY NATIONAL is launching its direct motor insurance arm. Policies will include written-off and stolen claims usually paid within seven days, optional protected no-claims bonuses, a courtesy car and free tow-aways to the nearest approved dealer in the event of accidents. Call 0800 808080.

GUINNESS FLIGHT is offering a 1 per cent discount off the initial 5 per cent charge levied on its Global Privatisation Trust, which aims to take advantage of state sell-offs throughout the world. Call 0171 5222111.

BUPA is launching a new long-term care policy which, it claims, will allow customers to tailor to their individual needs. Payments can be paid for a person's lifetime, or for between two to three years. Deferment periods of up to two years are possible, while indexation up to 15 per cent can be taken. Call 0171 6562000.

FINANCIAL OPTIONS, a network of independent

financial advisers, is offering a free guide to planning your finances. Copies are available by calling 0161 8747021.

JOHN CHARCOL, mortgage brokers, is offering a flexible mortgage fixed at 3.75 per cent for one year, with the option of paying off 25 per cent of the loan within the first three years without redemption penalties. Overpayments can be borrowed back without charge. The loan is available for up to 90 per cent of a home's value. A completion fee of £295 is payable. Call 0800 718181.

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LEGAL & GENERAL is cutting by up to 35 per cent the cost of mortgage-linked term assurance. A decreasing term policy for £75,000 for a 40-year-old male drops from £33.65 to £24.45 a month. Call 01737 374520.

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BRIAN TORA

AITC spruces up its image and celebrates after a year of management coups and vulture funds

ONE OF the more pleasurable occasions on the City's social calendar is the Association of Investment Trust Companies' (AITC) summer party. This trade body represented the companies themselves, rather than their managers. As it happened, this has proved sensible as these days the managers of investment trusts can change quite easily. Given the industry has had a difficult 12 months, it was surprising how upbeat a party it was.

Investment trusts have flowed in and out of vogue over the years. Responding to apparent threats from unit trusts, they sharpened their marketing act, became more inventive in capital structures and generally made themselves more appealing to investors. Discounts – the difference between the price of the shares and the value of the underlying assets – narrowed from nearly 40 per cent in the 1970s to close to zero a few years ago.

Investment trusts, remember, have a fixed share capital and are quoted on the stock market, so the value of these shares is free to fluctuate regardless of what is happening to their portfolios. Over the past year this market has become rather tired. Discounts have widened again, which makes it difficult to launch new trusts. Predators have started to move in, targeting those trusts where managers had failed to deliver the goods. It all felt as if we were returning to the bad old days of the 1970s.

Nonetheless, the industry takes very seriously the need to address its image in the marketplace. Vulture funds and management coups are all very well, but the AITC wants to see a return to more stable conditions, along with a narrowing of discounts.

I have always been a fan of investment trusts. Buy them at a discount and you have more assets working for your

money. Moreover, it is generally easier for managers to run an investment trust – you do not have to contend with the in-laws and outflows of money that can plague the managers of unit trusts.

The trend does seem to have reversed on discounts, but they are still high. I was pleased to see Michael Moule of Bankers Trust receive an award for the clarity of its report at the party. Even so, Bankers' shares stand on a 9 per cent discount to assets which I consider undervalues Michael's talents.

Contrast that with the average unit trust, where you are likely to be paying the equivalent of a 6 per cent premium over the value of the underlying portfolio. Trawling through the investment trust list threw up a number of interesting situations.

The Henderson's Smaller Companies trust looks interesting on a discount of 17 per cent. Smaller companies are out of favour at present, but then they stand on much less demanding ratings. The Invesco English and International investment trust also has a double-digit discount and the advantage of being managed by a group that seems to have got its act together in recent years.

If it is income you are looking for, then Temple Bar offers a 4 per cent plus a discount of 7 per cent. There are plenty to choose from and many offer savings schemes, allowing you to "pound cost average" if you are nervous.

Investment trusts will not necessarily protect you against any setback, but they are a way of buying today's assets at a discount. And if the degree of optimism at Wednesday's party was anything to go by, the corner may just have been turned.

Brian Tora is chairman of the Greig Middleton investment strategy committee

BEST BORROWING

Telephone	Rate and period	Max. fee	Inc.
MORTGAGES			
FIXED RATES			
Scarthouse BS	0590 133149	0.95% for 1 year	95% 0.75% FreeMIP for adv up to 90%
FirstMortgages	0800000008	5.35% to 31.05.01	75% £295
Abbey National	0800 555100	5.95% to 30.6.03	90% £385 No MIP for adv up to 90%
VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES			
Scarthouse BS	0590 133149	1.50% for 1 year	95% £250
Principality BS	0800 163817	4.40% to 1.9.00	80% £295 No high lending fee
Nationwide BS	0800 302010	6.65% for 5 years	95% £295 Refund Valuation fee
FIRST TIME BUYERS FIXED RATES			
Northam Rock	0845 605 0500	4.45% to 1.10.00	95% £295 No MIP for adv up to 85%
Hallux	0800 101110	5.75% to 31.8.01	90% £185 No high lending fee (MIP)
Scarthouse BS	0590 133149	6.15% for 5 years	95% £295
FIRST TIME BUYERS VARIABLE DISCOUNTED RATES			
FirstMortgages	0800 080088	4.70% to 31.8.00	90% £295 Free high lending fee
Nationwide BS	0800 302010	6.25% 3 years	95% £295 Refund Valuation fee
Derbyshire BS	01332 841000	7.15% for 5 years	90% £125 No high lending fee
UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS			
Telephone	APR %	Fixed monthly payments on £5K over 3 yrs	
(UNSECURED)			
Northam Rock	0345 421421	9.9% H	£183.13
Yorkshire Bank	0800 302122	12.5% H	£185.77
Direct Line	0181 590 9999	12.9% A	£188.38
SECURED LOANS (SECOND CHARGE)			
Telephone	APR	Max. LTV Advance	Term
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	9.5% Neg	£3K to £15K 6 mths to 25 years
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 121121	11.2% 70%	£2.5K to £100K 3 years to 10 years
First Direct	0345 100103	11.4% 80%	£3K to Neg Up to 40 years
OVERDRAFTS			
Telephone	Account	Authorised	Uncollected
Albion & Leicester	0540 059595	Albion	0.95% 12.00% 2.20% 25.2%
Bank of Scotland Direct	0500 804804	Direct Charge	11.0% 11.0% 26.5%
Nationwide BS	0800 302010	Revolving	0.97% 12.2% 2.10% 26.3%
CREDIT CARDS			
Telephone	Card Type	Rate	APR % Annual Int. Free Min. period Income
Capital One Bank	0800 599000	Visa	0.95% 5.95% Nil 54 days
RBS Advance	0800 077770	Visa	0.64% 7.99% Nil 56 days
Nationwide BS	0500 302011	Visa	0.65% 8.50% Nil 52 days
GOLD CARDS			
Capital One Bank	0800 699000	Visa	0.95% 5.95% Nil 54 days £20K
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Base Rate Visa	0.61% 7.50% Nil 56 days £20K
RBS Advance	0800 077770	Visa	0.64% 7.99% Nil 56 days £20K
STORE CARDS			
Telephone	Payment by direct debit	Payment by other methods	
John Lewis	Via card	% PR % APR	% PR % APR
John Lewis	Via card	1.35% 18.0%	1.35% 18.0%
John Lewis	Via card	1.95% 25.0%	2.15% 25.0%
John Lewis	Via card	1.97% 25.3%	2.07% 27.8%

BEST SAVINGS

Telephone	Account	Notice of term	Deposit	Rate	Interest
INSTANT ACCESS					
Clydesdale Bank	0800 445265	Savings	Instant	£1	6.75% City
Sainsbury's Bank	0500 405060	Instant Access Savings	Instant	£1	6.75% Year
Woodwich	0800 222000	Card Saver	Instant	£50	6.75% Year
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0500 225777	Premium Access	Instant	£5,000	7.00% Year
INSTANT ACCESS POSTAL ACCOUNTS					
Nationwide BS	0500 302010	InvestDirect	Postal	£1	7.30% Year
S & S	0800 742437	Instant Transfer	Instant	£1	7.50% Year
First National BS	0800 559844	Direct Access	Postal	£5,000	7.50% Year
Northam Rock	0845 605 6767	Saver Instant Direct	Instant (B)	£5,000	7.80% Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS					
Cheltenham BS	0800 132351	Post-Net 40	40 Day (B)	£5,000	7.80% Year
Standard Life Bank	0345 55557	50 Day Notice	50 Day (T)	£1	7.50% Year
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	60 Day Notice	60 Day (B)	£10,000	7.70% Year
Legal & General Bank	0500 111200	60 Direct 5	60 Day (B)	£10,000	8.00% Year
CHEQUE ACCOUNTS					
Investec Bank (UK)	0171 203 1850	HCA 5000	Instant	£5,000	6.60% Month
Hallux	0113 235 6220	Asset Reserve	Instant	£10,000	5.70% City
Cheltenham BS (with 10.7.98)	0800 429429	Classic Postal	Instant	£10,000	3.95% Year
Leopold Joseph	0171 586 2363	Instant Access	Instant	£10,000	6.70% Year
FIXED RATE BONDS					
Barclay & West	0800 302121	Fund for Mtn	9 Month	£5,000	7.65% Maturity
Westminster	0113 235 6220	Frontier Fixed Rate	31.3.99	£10,000	8.00% Maturity
Paragon BS	0800 807080	Barclay Fixed Rate Bond	1 Year	£500	7.50% Maturity
Barclay & West	0800 302121	One Year Option Bond	1 Year	£5,000	6.00% Maturity
FIRST TESSAS					
Investec BS	01473 211021	5 Year	£100	8.05% Year	
SAGA (over 50s)	0800 300555	5 Year	£5,000	6.65% Year	
Midland Bank	0800 180180	5 Year	£100	8.00% Year	
Marwell & Phoenix	0801233 372222	5 Year	£10	6.00% Year	
FOLLOW-ON TESSAS					
Burghley Bank	0800 400100	5 Year	£5,000	6.50% Year	
Leeds & Holbeck BS	0500 225777	5 Year	£1	8.05% Year	
Stratford & Ropley BS	0800 925888	5 Year	£500	7.50% Year	
Staffordshire BS	0800 21621	5 Year	£10,000	6.65% Year	
GUARANTEED INCOME BONDS (net)					
GE Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	1 Year	£10,000	6.50% FR Year	
GE Financial Assurance	0181 380 3388	2 Year	£10,000	6.31% FR Year	
Hamble Assurance	0800 838029	3 Year	£5,000	5.90% FR Year	
Hamble Assurance	0800 838029	4 Year	£5,000	6.75% FR Year	
Hamble Assurance	0800 838029	5 Year	£50,000	5.80% FR Year	
OFFSHORE ACCOUNTS (gross)					
Britannia International	01624 681168	Capital Wise Direct	Instant	£10,000	7.50% Year
Britannia & West Int Ltd	01179 807072	Instant Access	Instant	£50,000	7.80% Year
First National BS (Australia)	01461 710400	60 Day Notice	60 Day	£10,000	7.80% Year
Cheltenham BS	01461 700800	Offshore 60	60 Day	£50,000	8.00% Year
NATIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNTS (gross)					
Investment Accounts		1 Month	£20	5.00% Year	
		3 Month	£50	5.35% Year	
		6 Month	£100	5.70% Year	
		9 Month	£250	5.95% Year	
		1 Year	£500	6.20% Year	
		2 Year	£1,000	6.45% Year	
		3 Year	£2,500	6.70% Year	
		4 Year	£5,000	7.00% Year	
		5 Year	£10,000	7.20% Year	
		6 Year	£25,000	7.40% Year	
		7 Year	£50,000	7.60% Year	
		8 Year	£100,000	7.80% Year	
		9 Year	£250,000	8.00% Year	
		10 Year	£500,000	8.20% Year	
		11 Year	£1,000,000	8.40% Year	
		12 Year	£2,500,000	8.60% Year	
		13 Year	£5,000,000	8.80% Year	
		14 Year	£10,000,000	9.00% Year	
		15 Year	£25,000,000	9.20% Year	
		16 Year	£50,000,000	9.40% Year	
		17 Year	£100,000,000	9.60% Year	
		18 Year	£250,000,000	9.80% Year	
		19 Year	£500,000,000	10.00% Year	
		20 Year	£1,000,000,000	10.20% Year	

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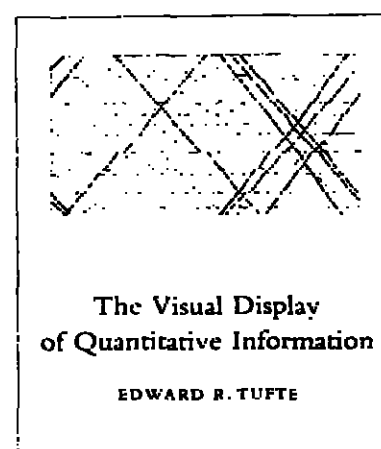
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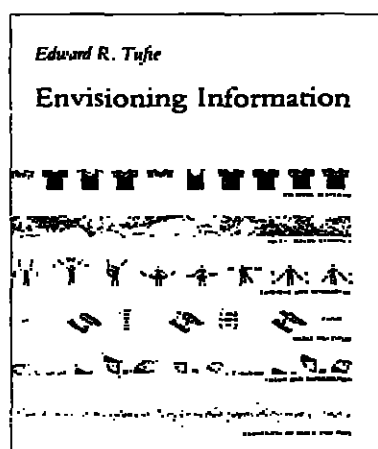
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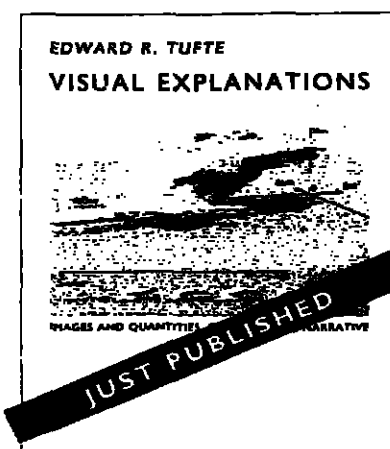
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Tracker funds for uncertain times ahead

LACKLUSTRE performance by the London Stock Exchange's top 100 shares over the last two months should have prompted astute investors to wonder whether more profitable returns can be gained elsewhere in the next few years.

The bull run which the Financial Times Stock Exchange 100 share index has enjoyed, especially over the last two years, appears over, with many market commentators wondering if its stocks are now overpriced.

One of the most straightforward and cost-effective ways for first-time investors to exploit the FTSE 100's growth would have been by investing in a tracker fund. These are invested to give returns that match the growth or fall of a stock market index.

While tracker funds are great in a bull market – the FTSE 100 produced 150 per cent growth in the five years to June and 72 per cent in the preceding two years (based on mid-to-mid prices, net income reinvested) – they can be lame ducks in a falling market.

There are many FEPs and unit trusts that track the FTSE 100, the index of top 100 companies. However, three tracker funds have been launched that track the FTSE All Share Index, which includes 857 of the companies listed on the London Stock Exchange.

That does not mean trackers themselves are a wrong investment. Research by *The Independent* last year showed that although they reflect any general falls in the market, they follow it upwards as well as – if not better than – most managed funds. It may pay, however, to look at a more diversified form of tracking. Indeed, it appears that several investment companies believe better returns can be made over the next few years in tracker funds that invest more widely than the FTSE 100.

Data by the research company Micropal shows that the last FTSE 100 tracker fund launch was the City Financial netPEP Tracker in March 1997. Since then, All Share Tracker launches have included the Eagle Star UK Index Tracker (September 1997); the M&G Index Tracker (February 1998); and the Scottish Widows UK All Share (March 1998).

A major reason to invest in a FTSE All Share fund rather than a FTSE 100 fund is that the former gives exposure to a more diverse portfolio. The FTSE 100 has become dominated over the

All Share funds give exposure to a more diverse portfolio. By Stephen Sheppard

last few years by financial, oil and pharmaceutical firms. As a result, if something happens to affect one of these sectors, the whole index will move up or down. Allan McKenzie, director of Scottish Widows investment management, says: "Last year was unusual in that the top five stocks accounted for half the rise in the FTSE 100."

Investors who want to diversify their investments to reduce risk might therefore find the FTSE 100 inappropriate. Simon Davies, chief investment officer at Threadneedle Asset Management, the fund manager for Eagle Star, says: "By investing in the FTSE 100 you are taking industry bets, which is not what you are supposed to do in an index fund."

He is also pessimistic about the near-term future of the industries represented in the FTSE-100. "The oil price is not going anywhere; pharmaceuticals stocks are looking very expensive; and fundamentals for mortgage banks with a price war breaking out are not brilliant. To bet on the FTSE 100 winning again would not be a good thing to do."

Justin Modray, investment adviser at the Bath IFA firm Chase De Vere, said: "The general market consensus seems to say that the FTSE 100 has done well, but maybe there is better potential value in smaller to mid-cap stocks – and managers are casting their nets wider to include these areas within their tracker funds by tracking the All Share."

Many of the mid-size to smaller firms listed on the Stock Exchange, especially manufacturing firms, have been hit by having to pay high loan repayments, thanks to the high interest rate, and have lost export business because of the strong pound.

The latest economic data and comments by Eddie George, Governor

of the Bank of England, indicate that this may continue for some time yet. However, the FTSE 250 should start to recover from the falls it has suffered once markets are confident that interest rates have peaked and sterling finally starts to weaken.

Richard Carswell, founder of the netPEP unit trust, which is marketed exclusively on the Internet, is more optimistic about the FTSE 100's prospects. He says: "The FTSE 100 companies are substantially diverse in their nature, with assets in the UK and abroad producing good returns which they will continue to do."

He points out that the index accounts for 75 per cent of the value of UK corporate firms. "A recession would affect companies further down the list, too. You don't have one sector of the exchange that is more recessionary-proof than any other."

If there is reason enough to diversify investments beyond the FTSE 100, then there is also good reason to invest in tracker funds that could take advantage of growth in Europe? The European single currency is expected to spur growth and opportunities for companies in the so-called "Euro-zone".

Barry Orr, associate partner at the City-based independent financial adviser Master Adviser, says: "I am definitely positive on Europe. The economies are doing well in all European countries, but particularly in Italy and France. They squeezed into the EMU, but they have a year and a half to clean up their act and that is why we are seeing huge

Help with the unit trust homework

WHEN YOU buy a unit trust, the chances are that – as with most financial transactions – you do nothing like as much homework as you would do with other choices you make in life.

I suspect that more people will look at a magazine such as *Which?*, for example, when they are about to buy a toaster than whenever they are setting out to buy a pension fund or a unit trust.

When they do decide for themselves, most people still tend to base their decision on past performance figures and not much more – despite the clear evidence that this is a naive and unprofitable strategy.

There are lots of reasons why this should be so, starting unfortunately with financial illiteracy. I did not realise until I came across some research the other day that most people find it quite tough to cope with even the most basic financial concepts.

A study by the National Foundation for Educational Research in 1995, for example, found that nearly 30 per cent of the population were not aware that 10 per cent of £300 was more than £25; fewer than half the population were able to distinguish between gross and net interest. (One in four people incidentally expressed no interest in finding out anything more about financial topics).

The obvious difficulties for those who do want to take responsibility

for their financial decisions, and know how to do some basic sums, lies in finding the right sources of advice and information. The choice of unit trusts these days, for example, is so wide that it is easy to find the task of choosing a good one quite daunting.

Most people still lack access to the kind of information which they could profitably use to distinguish between a consistently good performer and a much more volatile or badly managed fund (of which there are a fair few).

To give one example – taken almost at random from Micropal's excellent web site on the Internet – the best performing UK equity growth fund over three years produced a return of 174 per cent; the worst a return of 34 per cent. Over five years the comparable range in performance was 249 per cent (the best) to 48 per cent (the worst). And so on.

Without access even to basic performance data (other than that provided by the unit trust companies themselves), it is not surprising that the ability to make a well-informed decision is a rare beast – and why most people still rely on advice when deciding what to do. It is a pity that in many cases investors have no idea that the advice they receive may have been influenced by the payment of commission.

But even if you have the data, the

trick of picking the right fund is not as easy as it should be. What you are trying to do is pick a fund that is capable of consistently good or above-average performance, and which has the right kind of risk profile for your particular circumstances.

In order to do that, you need to know how to measure the risk of the fund you are buying and, just as importantly, how to assess exactly what kind of risk you are prepared to tolerate. This last part is a subject with which even the experts are only gradually coming to terms.

As Ron Dembo and Andrew Freeman demonstrated in a new book on risk management*, there

are now lots of statistical tools for assessing risk in unit trusts and other managed funds. The study of risk in finance, and the development of new products designed to control risk more effectively, have both become growth industries in the last 30 years. However, the problem of how to convey the dimensions of investment risk in a meaningful way to investors remains largely unresolved.

One reason is that risk means different things to different people. When the SEC in the United States asked the mutual fund industry to come up with new ways of disclosing risk, it was unable to find a single measure of risk that satisfied

everyone (so it ducked the issue). Its consumer surveys showed that most people agreed with several different formulations of what risk means in financial terms. For some people it was simply the risk of losing part or all of their money; for others, it was what inflation could do to the value of their money; and for others still it was the risk that the financial institution where they put their money would fail.

In truth, the honest answer is that risk is a multi-faceted beast, which encompasses not just the risk of loss, but the complex and personal trade-offs which each individual is willing to make between

potential risks and rewards in any course of action (overlaid by the fact that the future is unknown and often unknowable in precise terms).

Some people would not risk even £10 for a 90 per cent chance of gaining, say, £50,000; others would take a quite different attitude, depending on such things as their age, wealth and experience. Risk is ultimately a very personal thing.

But that does not mean that the unit trust business (or any other financial services business) could not make a better stab at portraying the nature of the risk in their products.

For example, many unit trusts in practice perform within fairly narrowly defined bands relative to their comparable market index and this, coupled with the expected probability of returns from shares generally, can be turned into fairly precise indications of the range of likely future returns.

It is also possible to rank unit trusts and other funds in terms of their risk-adjusted returns (i.e. adjusting their performance figures to reflect the degree of volatility they have shown in the past) – an exercise which can produce interesting reversals of position in the industry league tables.

Dembo and Freeman give an example of one way in which they believe the likely returns from two different funds might be illustrated in a graph (above) and show the

range of probable future outcomes. The shaded areas on each graph attempt to illustrate how often (and by how much) a particular fund is likely to outperform its benchmark market index over time – the area above the central line being the occasions when it does better than the benchmark; the area below the line being those occasions when it fails to keep pace with the index.

This conclusion is that the fund on the left has a much better risk profile than that on the right. Does this kind of illustration say anything to you? Probably not, I suspect.

The statistical methodology is certainly not foolproof. However, this is the way I think we can expect to see the investment business gradually moving. In principle, because of the development of derivatives, it is now perfectly possible to offer investors a product which, for example, offers equity-type returns but guarantees the avoidance of loss above a certain proportion of your capital.

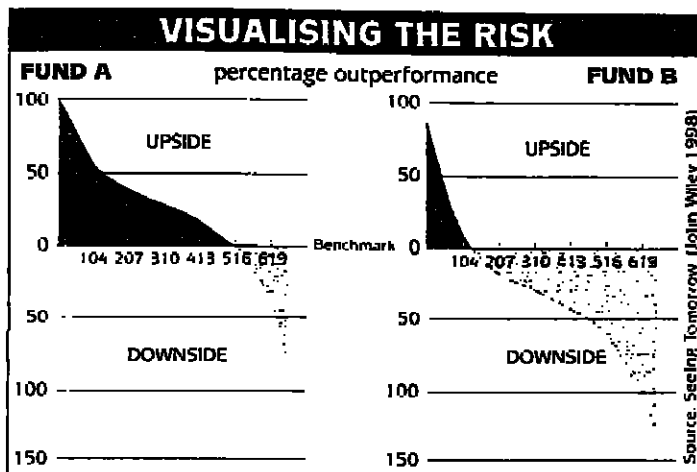
It comes with a price – insurance always does – but then trading off risk and reward is what investment is all about.

The problem is that before we can start to play with these sophisticated tools, we have to learn some basic maths – and that is still a long way off for many.

* *Seeing Tomorrow*, published by John Wiley



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Income plays off the return

Sarah Barnett assesses the problems in seeking cash from high-yield investments

IF YOU are looking for an investment that gives you a high level of income beats inflation, outstrips any cash deposit account and will not risk your capital, think again.

Taking an income from your investments often means that you can wave goodbye to growing your capital. And if you desire a high income then you must be prepared to risk losing some of your money in the process.

The right income-producing product depends very much on your own personal circumstances. If you are a pensioner looking to boost your retirement income, the product you need is likely to be very different from that suitable for a young couple looking to invest in a child's education.

But the purpose for which you are investing is only one part of the equation. Your age, wealth and willingness to risk some of your money have a major part to play.

For income-seekers, the offerings now available range from low-risk investments, such as deposits, gilts and National Savings, through to higher-risk products such as high-income and corporate bond PEPs, with profits bonds and so-called "guaranteed" high-income bonds.

Unfortunately, many products that offer a high income show low rates of return at a time when some banks, building societies and new financial service providers, such as the supermarkets, are offering interest rates of up to 7.5 per cent on deposits with instant access.

Doug Brodie, a director at independent financial adviser, Masteradviser, bluntly describes the current array of income investments as "poor".



A wad in the pocket, but make sure you understand the risks

He explains: "As the market rises, dividend streams get squeezed, which makes it difficult to create income-producing products. If you want pure income taken off your capital, currently cash is the way to do it."

If you want something that can offer you more than this, then you have to be prepared to take a risk.

PEPs should be your first port of call, as these offer the benefit of being income tax free. The same products are available to you if you have used up your PEP allowance, but you must bear in mind the income and capital gains tax implications.

There is a large selection of income-producing unit and investment trust products available, but many of the so-called high income funds are yielding paltry returns – around 3 per cent at the moment.

As a rule of thumb, a fund that is offering a higher yield than its peers is one that will expose you to a greater degree of risk.

For example, Foreign & Colonial High Income is offering a superb yield of 8.66 per cent. It has a high equity content which makes it more volatile, but this is the price you have to pay if you want to make money. The performance of

the fund, apart from producing income, has been poor. Some corporate bond PEPs offer a very good deal. These carry a lower risk than equity-based funds, but, again, some funds will expose you to more risks than others. A fund currently favoured by many independent financial advisers is Commercial Union's Monthly Income fund, which offers a yield of 6.81 per cent.

Another option is the "guaranteed" high-income bond. These bonds guarantee to pay a monthly or yearly income, typically for five or six years, but the downside is that you may not get all your money back.

The high-yield bonds now available are all linked to one or more stock market indices. If these indices rise over the term of the bond then you get back your original investment. If they fall, however, then all you get back is your capital minus the income you have received.

Martha Catterall, senior financial planner at City Independent Financial Planning warns: "The more indices the bond is linked to, the higher the risk involved. I favour those that are linked to a maximum of two indices as opposed to three."

Vivienne Starkey, a senior consultant at the financial advisers Haddock Porter Williams, agrees that these products are risky, but claims that they have a place for people who are prepared to sacrifice a large sum in order to obtain an income stream.

She says: "If you have a substantial amount to invest, you can put a small amount away for a high income and the rest for growth. But if it's all the money you've got, it's a foolish route to take."

The message is clear: if you want to avoid mishap when choosing an income-producing investment, you must ensure that you understand exactly the risks involved. Never be lured by the offer of double-digit yields alone.

"It's easy to paint a rosy picture," says Martha Catterall. "Figures in big writing in the advertisements are nearly always the gross amount, and if you're a higher rate taxpayer then you are going to get significantly less than that."

And then, there is the potential risk to capital.

Sarah Barnett is editor of *'What Investment'*

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There's a huge range of credit card schemes on offer – so shop around. By Abigail Montrose

It is possible to find cards that charge less than 1 per cent a month on outstanding

There are literally thousands of these cards, supporting all sorts of organisations, including Oxfam, Chelsea Football Club and even the Labour Party. Interest rates are competitive, and where the cards have an annual or initial fee this is usually donated to the affinity group. After that donations are made, typically, at a rate of 0.25 per cent on the money you spend on your card. So for every £100 spent, there is a 25p donation from the card issuer to the affinity group.

points being worth £1. So for every £100 spent you receive £1-worth of loyalty points.

Other incentives include Air Miles. NatWest, for example, offers one Air Mile for every £20 you spend on its Combined Account credit card. At that rate, you would need to spend around £9,000 before you had enough miles to get to Paris. But if you use the card in certain selected outlets, such as Sainsbury's, you receive two sets of Air Miles for the same purchase. But watch out for the card's £12 annual fee.

Barclaycard offers Profile points which can be exchanged

Common sense in a crazy world

- **Don't go for the most common card simply because everyone else has one.** The most popular have the highest charges.
- **If you are unlikely to pay off your debt in full each month, look for the card which charges the cheapest interest.**
- **If you do settle your bill in full, look for the card with the longest interest-free period.**
- **Remember, loyalty points now mean more than electric kettles.** You can get Air Miles, help pay off your gas bill, receive straight discounts or even the cost of your next Ford or Vauxhall by choosing the right card.
- **Don't pay too much attention to 'loyalty schemes' unless you pay off your debts.** In which case spending £2m to receive a £20 electric kettle isn't a bad deal.
- **If you are likely to use your card abroad, look out for cards from Liverpool Victoria's Frizzell one, that charge no fee for withdrawing cash from foreign ATMs.**
- **Avoid cards that levy or charge an annual fee.** With so many providers no longer doing so, why pay up to £12 a year?
- **Don't forget to take care of your card.** Don't leave it lying around, make sure you report its loss instantly.

The company may monitor or record telephone conversations with the aim of improving its service.

Cardholders must be aged 18 or over. Applications are subject to status, credit verifications available on request. For Purchases and Balance Transfers, interest will be charged on a daily basis at the standard rate of 1.30% per month/17.9% APR (variable), 19.7% APR (fixed). Interest will not be taken into account as effect of any Money Back which may be paid in respect of any interest currently outstanding. Promotion Balance Transfer Rate of 12.5% APR (fixed) or 11.5% APR (fixed) if other account closed at the same time, interest will be charged from the date the transfer reaches the account. Conditions and restrictions apply to both the Money Back Scheme, the Money Back Partners and the Introductory Rate of Balance Transfer. Full details available on request and are included in the application pack. Within 25 days of the date of your monthly statement, you must reply at least 2% of the amount outstanding (£5 minimum). The standard Money Back on purchases is 0.5% up to £2,999.99 and 1% above. Purchases for business or trade purposes are not eligible. Double Money Back will be awarded for every purchase where you shop in any of our selected Money Back partners. Money Back Partner conditions apply. Full details will be provided before you receive your card and will be available on request. You will receive 10% Money Back on any eligible purchase made with your card. Money Back will be credited to your card account on the 1st of the month following the purchase. For security and fraud prevention, any cardholder who is not an eligible cardholder will be contacted by email. OFFERS ARE VALID 28/2/20.

A des res with all mod cons and some very quiet neighbours

Believe it or not, having a graveyard instead of a garden is some people's idea of paradise. By Ginetta Vedrickas

Ever wake in the night to strange sounds? Sirens and car alarms are the norm for most urban dwellers. But if you live near a churchyard, some noises may prove quite inexplicable.

Liz and John Bridgeman moved from London to the 17th-century Church House, chosen for its "perfect position near a pub and next to the churchyard" in Pluckley village, in Kent. They hadn't been there long when John woke in the middle of the night: "It was 4am and bitterly cold when I heard footsteps outside. It sounded like someone being chased up the gravel track to the churchyard. It went quiet, then I heard them running back."

Next day, John asked whether his neighbours had heard anything and was told, matter-of-factly: "Oh, that's the headless horseman, one of the village's many ghosts." Pluckley is often called "England's most haunted village", and was also the location for the television series *The Darling Buds of May*.

The Bridgemans have experienced other strange events - "a baby monitor crying when there were no babies in or near the house" and "footsteps in an upstairs room when we were downstairs" - but Mr Bridgeman remains unconvinced: "I'm still pretty sceptical." Other villagers tell of queerer goings-on: "Cochoads of old ladies looking for David Jason", a phenomenon that is surely harder to explain than anything supernatural.

Is graveside living problematic? "Hallowe'en's a bad night. Hundreds of pissed-up ghost-hunters descend on the village going 'Whooh!' Since gravestones were smashed in the late Eighties, the police patrol Pluckley to make sure the witching time of night passes peacefully, but this brings little comfort to some residents. 'They lock everything up and disappear for the night,' says Mr Bridgeman."

Does a graveside site deter would-be buyers? Richard Lee, manager of Acorns' Peckham branch, recently marketed a Grade II-listed lodge in Nunhead cemetery: "It was one of the most popular places I've ever sold. It has a turret and views of the old church. It created a lot of interest - we had queues of clients wanting to view."



Graveside life offers plenty of green space to the Bridgemans - as long as you don't mind the ghosts

Rex Batten, of the Friends of Nunhead Cemetery, does not consider it a place just for the dead, and is pleased that the lodge's new inhabitants appear sensitive to the cemetery's development. Mr Batten runs tours and points out hidden graves of noteworthy Victorians in 50 acres of what has become a forest. The cemetery is popular with

location companies and was used in a German film of Brian Stoker's life, but the Friends forbid horror-film shoots. Would he himself like to live there? "If I won the lottery, it's not a bad back garden, is it?"

Richard Lee's clients pay premium prices for "anything unusual", but he accepts that graveyards "aren't everyone's cup of tea".

including his: "Imagine it's late and you're watching *Night of the Living Dead* - you'd have to be brave."

A Dover agent admitted that he found it impossible to sell a chapel that was ripe for conversion. In Old Hawkinge, near Folkestone, in spite of its interesting history: "Oliver Cromwell was supposed to have stopped off for a pint there. We had

lots of curiosity viewings but no serious interest. Only a pretty special sort of person would want to live on consecrated ground."

Simon Coe, surveyor for Biscoe Craig Hall, has worked on many church conversions. He warns that a building that is highly regarded for its architecture may not get planning permission for residential con-

version: "It's sometimes difficult to find a use that respects the building's architectural integrity."

One couple bought their listed cemetery lodge in south London three years ago and, after lovingly restoring it, are about to move in: "We saw the outside on the Friday and submitted a sealed bid and proposal to the local council. We both

loved the idea but didn't in our wildest dreams imagine we'd get it. They rang on the Tuesday to say it was ours." Why a graveyard? "We weren't specifically looking for one, but we wanted something unusual that had not been done up by someone else."

The process was longer than the prospective purchasers imagined. It took 18 months to sell their old house, and the lodge suffered. "Vandals broke in and kicked the ceilings down, the roof leaked, and it was sad seeing it decline on each visit. But on a sunny day, it is the most beautiful, idyllic place."

Sitting under the cemetery's trees, it is easier to believe you are in a village than in deepest south London. But the tranquillity is soon shattered by mourners bearing flowers for a freshly dug grave, leaving me feeling like an interloper.

How do churchyard inhabitants cope with frequent ceremonies? "The council did slightly mislead us," says one owner. "They said there'd been hardly any burials lately, and we thought, 'Ah, a quaint old cemetery', but in fact it's extremely active, with funerals every day. I suppose it could be tricky if you had a party and mourners could hear the sounds of people having a good time." But she has a relaxed attitude towards mortality: "Life goes on, and I'd like to think that if I were at a funeral, I would enjoy hearing jolly children's voices."

What do her children feel about their new home? "We've explained that the gravestones are for people who have died, but I think the children don't believe that we're really going to live there as it's been such a long process."

Does she worry about ghosts? "Not unless you're going to frighten me!" So I don't. She has fantasies of what might float around the gravestones: "Entertaining Mr Sloane was filmed here, so I intend to prance around in chiffon like Beryl Reid." The only drawback she foresees is grave-hunters: "Visitors come up and say, 'I'm from Australia and I'm looking for my long-lost brother's grave.' Perhaps the sight of a chiffon-clad apparition will make them think twice."

Friends of Nunhead cemetery: 0181-693 6191; Acorns: 0171-771 6777

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MANY OF her friends suspect that Julia Williams was born with a drill in one hand and a chisel in the other.

In her previous house, she built the shelves and fitted the rails and the work surfaces in an elaborate kitchen which she designed herself. She tiles walls and floors, insulates lofts, builds garden patios and gates, and hangs curtain rails. She is as comfortable with power saws and drills as she is with hammers and nails.

Money was uppermost in her mind when she bought her first house 20 years ago. "It was an old property that would clearly require a lot of work," she says, "but it made no sense paying for small household jobs."

Tackling the easy jobs came naturally. "My father bought me my first set of tools. My mum thought I needed clothes, not tools, but she did teach me how to use kitchen equipment and gadgets, and a sewing-machine. A drill is just a different kind of machine."

Her parents encouraged her to believe that "there wasn't anything I could not do."

As Ms Williams climbed the ladder of DIY complexity, she welcomed push-starts from various mentors.

"I must have hired about 20 different people over the years - a handful of really skilled carpenters and electricians, and the rest were plumbers and repairers. I learned from most of them. People will explain how if you ask them."

She moved two years ago into another property hosting an on-going series of DIY challenges, including some that were new: "A boyfriend started me off with the bathroom tiles," she says. She then tiled her entire bathroom.

She is simultaneously confident and cautious: "I have my heart in my mouth with every new job. Personally I find it difficult starting a job, but once I start, it's fine."

Not all jobs are equally alluring. "I don't like plumbing; I like electricity. I never remember which tap cuts off the rising main, but I know how to switch off the mains." Recently she



There is nothing Julia Williams won't tackle

The female face of DIY

Robert Liebman meets a woman who was born holding a drill and a chisel

rewired a three-way switch that involved three separate switches interlinked by a spaghetti network of wires. If an electrical socket is protruding and she wants it flush with the wall, she gets out her drill and chisel, and does the job.

Ms Williams believes that women who are put off DIY because of dirt and dust may be doing themselves a disservice. "Some women probably don't like DIY because of the mess, but women do loads of cleaning and can keep it contained."

She nevertheless recalls the time when her brother helped to clear the loft to lay new insulation material.

"Old slate pieces had fallen between the rafters, probably from the original roof when it was slated, and we were filthy. The same job needs doing in this house, and I am putting it off."

Once was enough for jobs such as clearing old stonework to put down concrete flooring. "I think I ruined my back," she says. "I gave up trying to fix the central heating diverter valve in the last house."

These days Ms Williams also guards her time jealously, and she hired professionals to build her conservatory.

How much money has she saved over the years? "In terms of what I could have earned dur-

ing the time I put into DIY projects, I'm definitely quids out."

Why, then, do it? Aside from saving a bundle on many mundane quick repairs, she says, "I get the satisfaction of having it done the way I want it. It is done right. I know it works."

DIY skills are also handy to polish the work of the so-called professionals. "The woodwork in my conservatory was poorly done. They didn't sand it down. They didn't do any knotting. I'm not sure they even primed it."

Wood that has not been properly knotted oozes sap. Wood not sanded is "rough and gritty. I love the smooth finish of wood. My jobs end up feeling good as well as looking good."

Amateurs cannot cheat. A professional can take short cuts: can hide goofs that cannot be rectified. When Ms Williams tiles a wall, she ensures that the wall is smooth and well keyed. To cut tiles, she would use a tool best suited for a novice.

Ms Williams learned about chisels from a woodwork course. Instruction today is available on video, on cable television, and increasingly on regular terrestrial television. In the Yellow Pages, "Adult Education" uncovers numerous entries.

For anyone willing to commit an entire weekend and £130, plus extra for a hotel room, the manufacturer Robert Bosch runs a monthly DIY Academy in Somerset on "Basic Skills for Power Tool" s. Bosch promotes "girl power".

Gender-specific, and definitely more ambitious, is Women's Education in Building (WEB), which offers free training for unemployed women to earn vocational qualifications in carpentry, joinery, plumbing, electrical work, decorating and plastering. All the teachers are women.

A wide range of free pamphlets is available in DIY chains such as Wickes ("Plumbing Skills"), "Hanging and Glazing Doors", B&Q, and Homebase ("No 1 - Build a Patio", No 56 "Choose the Right Curtain Track"), and sometimes demonstrations are given.

If agents can ever be said to speak with one voice, they seem to agree at present that some vendors are expecting too much for their properties - although agents themselves can be just as much to blame. But certainly, anything that has been sit-

Bosch, 01895 834466; WEB, 0181-968 9139.

Vendors are pitching prices too high. By Penny Jackson

Ride the housing market tide

PEOPLE WAITING to cross the road to Tulse Hill station in south London this week were treated to a loud and animated conversation about the state of the property market from a builder leaning against a skip.

"It's flat. You'll never get it. I wouldn't take that on, mate," he shouted into his mobile. As we moved out of earshot, he began to talk about nervousness and interest rates.

Rather like the proverbial taxi driver, his observations are likely to have been made from a fair cross-section of contacts and follow a similar line to the latest report from the Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors (RICS).

The RICS finds that although London has some 4 per cent more members than the rest of the country reporting an increase in prices, these are now beginning to soften. The same number, about 48 per cent, do not expect to see any further rises in the capital during the next three months.

So, is this a good time to buy or to sell?

Everyone has become so used to dramatically skewed markets that it is difficult to convince some people that it can be good for both. The fact that a killing has not been made, or a bargain snapped up, is much healthier for everyone. As markets go, it is stable, and welcome for that.

FPD Savills has noted a 5.5 per cent increase in Central London prices in the first six months of the year, half that of the same period last year. The advice from Savills' Ian Stewart is that it is a good time to buy, though the main stumbling block is over-ambitious sellers.

If agents can ever be said to speak with one voice, they seem to agree at present that some vendors are expecting too much for their properties - although agents themselves can be just as much to blame. But certainly, anything that has been sit-

ting around or has had to drop in price can give a misleading impression.

Rose Ireland has had her two-bedroom Kensington flat on the market since the beginning of the year. It was valued by John D Wood at £218,000 and she had a close offer within days. Then I was told by two other agents that it was worth £255,000. I felt I would be crazy not to take their advice. But I have not had a single offer at that price. I even reduced it to £233,000, and still nothing.

"If I hadn't been so stupid I could have sold it seven months ago for a similar amount I expect to get now," says Ms Ireland. "In fact, in some ways it will be harder, as there are many more flats for sale."

The prices tide that has been washing out from central London is now lapping at the edges of unfashionable but well-stocked areas such as Tulse Hill, where large family houses can boast proximity to Dulwich and Clapham. It is in these parts, however, where some vendors have been tempted to pitch prices beyond a reasonable level that buyers will pay.

Wallace Jaffray, of Hamptons International, says that sellers are being inspired by last year's extraordinary increases and shortage of good properties, but are finding that their homes are not moving.

"We saw a house that was sold for £400,000 a couple of years ago, £550,000 last year, and I valued it at £600,000 this year. The owner wants £800,000, which seems unlikely. Sellers can expect no less than last year, but they may not get more."

If this is a good time for buyers - a stable, quieter market with more supply - then finding the house that nobody else is prepared to take on to their books is one way of pricing yourself into an area.

Frances Halliday has made a career of such moves, and has now embarked on her latest venture into

the heart of Dulwich village. "We have always looked for something different that has the potential to make money," she says. "If we hadn't, we could not have afforded things like holidays or school fees."

The Hallidays, both artists, have an uncanny knack for finding the right moment in the market. Even though the large Herne Hill house they bought two years ago for less than £200,000 is within minutes of a clutch of good schools, it was then on the unfashionable fringes. After about £160,000-worth of work, it is now on the market for £625,000.

Before that, in the teeth of the recession, the couple took on a house that had been home to no one but squatters and travellers for so long that it had begun to affect prices nearby. "Apart from everything else, it had a terrible smell, since all the windows had been soldered shut," Mrs Halliday recalls.

For six months, the builders set it to rights before she and her husband Trevor picked up their paintbrushes. In a short time, they were able to sell it for £280,000 more than they had paid.

"We started hand-painting walls a few years ago, because artists' materials were the only things we had to hand. My interior design business began when I realised that I was earning next to nothing painting murals for people, while interior designers would wait in and charge a fortune," says Mrs Halliday.

There will always the odd property too dismal for most people to consider but not the derelict Georgian house in Norfolk that had 200 inquiries and was sold by Belton and Duffey for £80,000. "As long as you are not undoing someone else's improvement, it is amazing what you can achieve with taste and imagination," adds Frances Halliday.

The Herne Hill house is being sold by Wates (0181-299 0922).

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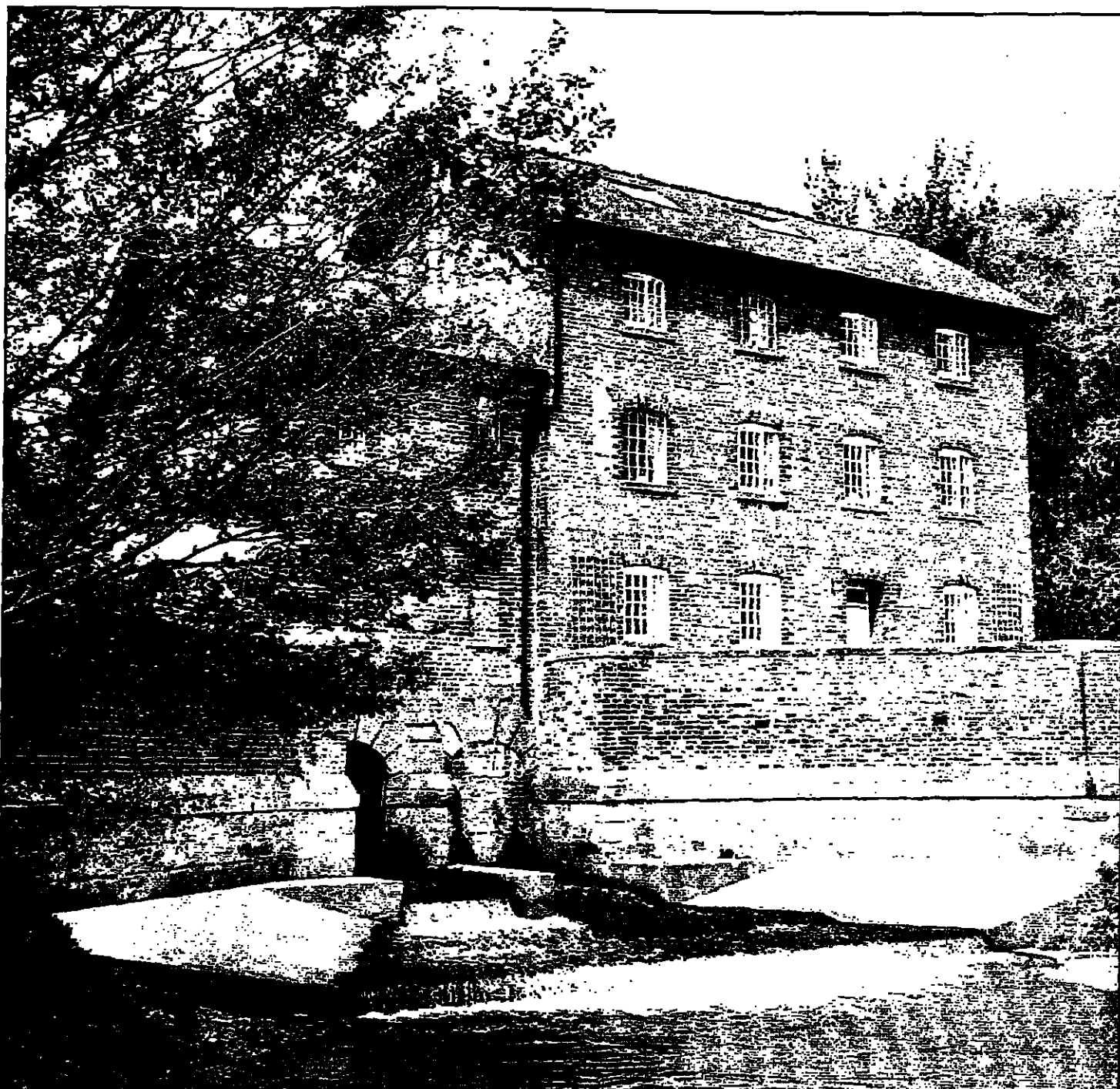
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A river runs through it

If falling asleep to the sound of running water is your idea of heaven, then an old mill could be the answer to your prayers. But make sure your insurance company agrees, says Mary Wilson



Part office, part home, Peplow Mill's conversion was at first turned down by high street insurers for full cover



To live by the water is many a home owner's dream, but not everyone wants to be by the sea. Old mills, however, can make wonderful houses if you like the continual sound of rushing water and there are several on the market, some of which have the original machinery intact. One thing you have to be aware of is that insurance may not be that straightforward to obtain. "We would consider it a non-standard risk," says Gill Murphy, a spokesperson for Direct Line. "There will be certain factors to consider, such as the flood risk and what kind of measures, if any, are in place to deal with that. If there were none, and there were a likelihood of flooding, we would have to look at it very carefully."

However, Peter Burnett, who owns Peplow Mill, near Hodnet in Shropshire, says that he did not find it that easy to find insurance. "High street insurers just turned me down," he says. "But it was not a problem with a specialist insurer, such as Home & Legacy, which helped me out. In fact, we are totally protected from flooding here as there is a huge channel to one side and if the water gets too high it just flows into that."

The property was operating as a working mill until 1978 and was converted by Peter and Andrea Burnett in 1994 into a four-storey, five-bedroom home. They have retained many original features and the river Tern runs from the mill stream beneath the house and through the grounds. "It was built in 1800 on very strong, dry ground and the river was diverted towards the house because the owner of a nearby property wanted a lake and mill houses were in vogue," says Mr Burnett. He and his wife bought the mill

in a derelict condition, attracted by its position and its nine-acre field. "It had no roof and was in a terrible state, but with my redundancy money from the army, we did it up and have run a management-training company from the bottom floor living on the top three floors."

'Our bedroom is right over the water and we sleep with the window open all the year round. The sound is very therapeutic'

which runs all the time. Our bedroom is right over the water and we sleep with the window open all the year round. The sound is very therapeutic. With five bedrooms, two reception rooms and a large reception hall on the ground floor, Lane Fox's Shrewsbury office is selling Peplow Mill for £320,000. Lane Fox's Pangbourne office is

also selling The Mill in Whitchurch-on-Thames, South Oxfordshire. This property can be traced back to the Domesday Book and the mill pond, stream and surrounding river and countryside were the source of inspiration for some of the illustrations in *The Wind in the Willows*. It is currently owned by Nick Butler, an in-

above the old water wheels, and the mill workings are in the workshop. The three-storey mill has a large workshop, a studio, two offices, a boardroom and a kitchen.

The property stretches right across the water and overlooks the mill stream, with the Thames to one side. It comes with mooring and fishing rights and, together with the lock keeper, the owners are the sole key holders to the Lock Bridge which spans the river giving direct access to Pangbourne station, just minutes away. The house is on the market for £125m.

"The river has never flooded because the water is controlled by the lock. Most people love it because the setting is so romantic, but a minority are a bit squeamish about it if they have children," says Mark Jamieson, of Lane Fox.

The late General Sir John Hackett's mill house, which fronts on the river Churn, Cokerley, in the Cotswolds, is for sale. Flour was ground here until the Thirties and some of the original machinery can

be seen from a chamber below the cloakroom floor. Cokerley Mill has a 35ft drawing-room, four bedrooms, and 12 acres of land. Jackson-Stops & Staff is selling the property for £500,000.

A 17th-century mill - Alrewas Mill - is being converted by Cala Homes (Midlands). This five-storey property on the banks of the river Trent in Staffordshire will contain seven one- and two-bedroom apartments, with one, on the ground floor, having a glass area in the living-room so that the stream can be seen running beneath it.

"As the mill race runs under the building, I thought it would be an ideal opportunity to 'walk on water' and view it through the floor," says Sue Parry, the sales and marketing director. Knight Frank is selling the apartments for £129,950 to £249,950.

Lane Fox, Pangbourne, 0118 9945757; Lane Fox, Shrewsbury, 01743 353511; Jackson-Stops & Staff, 01235 653334; Knight Frank, 0121 236 0777.



PENNY JACKSON

Pet owners can avoid paying through the nose for kennels

THIS IS proving to be a record year for Homesitters - an organisation that takes care of a property while its owners are on holiday.

Quite apart from an increasing nervousness about break-ins, and the incentive that some insurance companies offer a discount to policy-holders who use the service, pet owners can also avoid paying through the nose for boarding kennels.

On top of the charge of £21 a day for looking after the home itself, an extra 91p for a cat, £2.30 for a small dog and £2.95 for a large dog will see them fed, coddled and walked. Homesitters will take on almost all animals, though they prefer snakes to be comatose. One sitter recently took on a Noah's Ark of dogs, cats, goats, pigs, turtles and poultry.

They do tend to draw the line at difficult teenagers, though. "We prefer the fit elderly, and we are happy to provide some companionship and light shopping. They tend not to want all-night parties," says Adele Barclay, a spokeswoman for the company.

Sitters are often called in after an owner has died. If the home is eventually to be sold, probate sitting can last for several months. The company does not operate as an agency, but employs sitters who are fully vetted.

Homesitters, Buckland Wharf, Aylesbury, Bucks. HP22 5LQ (01296 630730)

IT IS not unusual for houses in expensive residential areas to be demolished and replaced with something grander. Weybridge and Hampton have both seen Thirties models bite the dust.

The latest site to see a new mansion-style home appear is in Putney, south-west London. Bewley Homes is about to put the roof on its six-bedroom house in Howards Lane.

The architect, Robert Adam, has taken features such as varying roof pitches and arched windows from Victorian and Edwardian design, to reflect the neighbouring architecture. There is a 1,000-bottle wine cellar below the garage. The guide price is £1.5m.

Agents Knight Frank (0181 946 0026)

Saddle up without the worry of motor car mayhem

Equestrian properties should have direct access from the stables to the countryside, without having to cross busy roads. Mary Wilson reports

IT IS fine to dream about owning a property with a bit of land and stables to house your children's ponies, but what about getting to where you want to ride? More and more families who are looking for an equestrian property are concerned about its position. Will their children have to cross a busy main road to be able to exercise their horses? And what about security? Moreover, there are worries about the safety of their prized ponies. Ideally there should be direct access from the stables to the countryside, and the animals should be in view from the house. "The reason we chose Sopers Farm 10 years ago was because of its position from a riding point of view," says Lesley-Ann New, who is now selling the property because the family has grown up and is less interested in horsey matters. "When we moved in the children were six and eight years old, and very keen on riding. My husband, Kelvin, was the hunt master with the Crawley and Horsham Hunt, but has recently retired. "There is an extensive network of bridleways, of which four run from each corner of the farm and only a

single-track farm lane runs behind the house, so it is completely safe," says Mrs New. "All the farmland is pasture, with lots of hedges, which are good for jumping." Sopers Farm in Steyning, West Sussex, is a seven-bedroom farmhouse set in 128 acres, with tennis court and swimming-pool. The equestrian facilities include 16 loose boxes, and jumping and pony paddocks. The property is being sold by Browns of Cranleigh for £1.5m. "It is very important for families to have both the chance of riding directly out from the property without having to cross a road, and also to have a property that is secure," says Mary Brown, of Browns. "You need to be able to see your horses, and also to have a property which does not have public footpaths going through the land." The agent is also selling Tedfold House, in Billingshurst, West Sussex. This is the main portion of a large Victorian property which has delightful views over the rolling countryside. "It has a good stable yard which overlooks its paddocks and a long drive up to the house," says Ms Brown.

The property comprises four bedrooms, 6.5 acres of land, three stables, a hay store and a tack room. It has a price tag of £365,000. "There are plenty of properties described as 'equestrian'," says Tony Mullucks, of Mullucks Wells & Associates in Bishops Cleeve, Hertfordshire. "One of the big issues is exactly where the property is located. It's no good if you have to cross busy streets, and have to put your horse in a horse-box to get to somewhere where you can ride. Also, people may want to be able to ride out from their property, but they also want to be part of village life." The Street Barn, which is next to Hatfield Forest, is a 16th-century property that needs some modernisation. It is at the end of a cul-de-sac and about 50 yards from the bridleway leading into the forest. Mullucks says the property has five bedrooms and five reception rooms, with the drawing room in a converted, heavily timbered barn. There are four looseboxes, a hay shed and two paddocks in four acres. The property is for sale for £375,000. Tilly Grange, in the hamlet of Tilly, near Great Dunmow, sits in 72 acres with woodland, so it is perfect

for riding on the householder's own land. It has no equestrian facilities at the moment, but these could easily be added. "This sort of property, which is virtually traffic-free, does have a scarcity value. It probably doesn't put a premium on the house, but it does mean more people will be interested in it," says Mr Mullucks. The six-bedroom property is on the market for £380,000. "I am often asked to find a property where horses could be kept, even if not immediately," says James Green, of Stacks Relocation. "Many people want a bit of land to keep a pony, ideally near one of the 25,000 miles of bridleways in England and Wales. "People also like to be in a part of the county that has a strong equestrian feel. They want the pony club and riding clubs which all go to make up the infrastructure connected with owning a horse." In Bickenhall, Somerset, Humberts' Taunton office is selling two properties that have direct access to hacking. One of them, Newberry Cottage, is a thatched 17th-century house backing on to two fields at the foot

of the Blackdown Hills. There are four loose boxes, a tack room and paddocks in almost nine acres. The four-bedroom property is for sale for £295,000. The second house, Hayfield Farm, is a large, four-bedroom bungalow with an octagonal sun room, standing in about 7.75 acres. It has outstanding views over the Blackdown Hills and a covered yard, with access from this to six stables and three paddocks. It is on the market for £250,000. Knight Frank is selling Kingston in Yelverton, Devon, a five-bedroom house with three stables and two paddocks in three acres, for £350,000. This has direct access to Dartmoor. Through its Stratford office, Knight Frank is offering for sale The Grange in Harvington, Worcestershire, for £475,000. The six-bedroom house, with 4.25 acres of land, has two stables, a paddock and a private track leading to open countryside. Browns, 01483 267070; Mullucks Wells & Associates, 01279 755400; Humberts, 01823 289484; Knight Frank, Erewer, 01392 423111; Knight Frank, Stratford-upon-Avon, 01789 297735



A clear view: not a car in sight

Flushed with success

Another loo or two adds value to a house.

By Rosalind Russell

Most home owners now take the view that just one loo is a loo too few. The minimum number of bath or shower rooms is two per three bedrooms, say estate agents. If you have not yet put in a downstairs cloakroom, identifying a space where you would fit one were you staying in the property, helps to sell the place to a potential buyer.

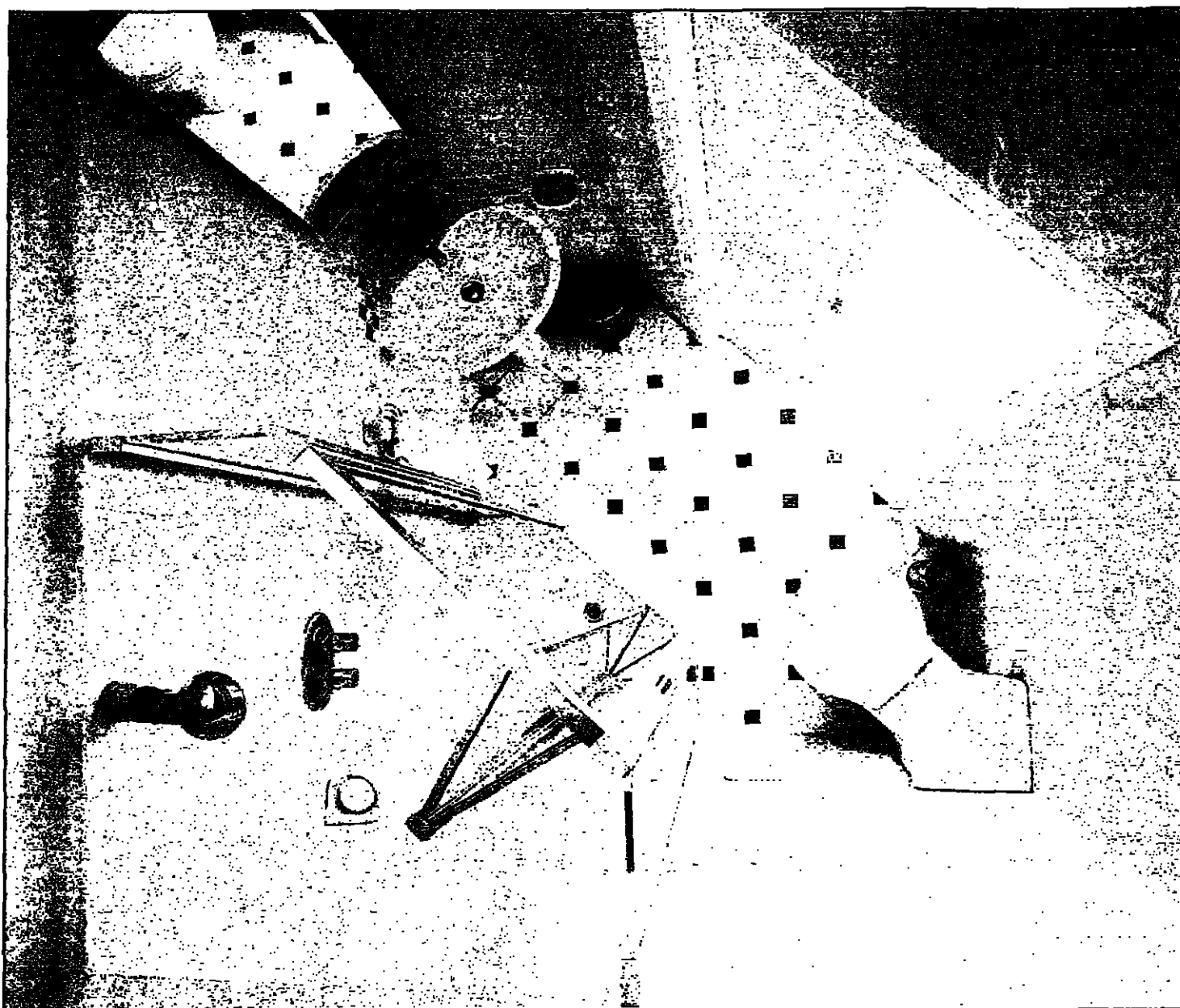
Fitting another shower room or bathroom need not necessarily involve building an extension, and if it is professionally done it will almost certainly add value to a property. To help people make the most of their space – and, of course, to sell lots of loos – Ideal Standard has launched a range called Space, which allows a lavatory to be fitted into the corner of an average-size bedroom.

Cisterns that fit into corners, loo seats set at an angle, short baths suitable for showering in and basins requiring little wall space are all designed to squeeze into a spare corner. A full suite, in white, old English white, peach or cream, costs from £1,200. It is an attractive proposition for anyone making plans to house a live-in nanny, granny or au pair, or even just refitting a small flat.

David Jones, who founded Colourwash Bathrooms, has three shops, in Fulham, west London, Brondesbury Park in north London, and Sunningdale in Berkshire.

"We have an Edwardian house with a large bedroom window and another small window at the side," he says. "We built an en suite so that it had its own window, and it looks as though it's always been there."

The Saniflo range of small-bore pumping systems allows a loo, shower and sink to be fitted almost anywhere, even in a basement, without the need for large-bore pipework. Clever shopping is the trick in



Serene ceramics – Ideal Standard's Space range allows a lavatory to be fitted into the corner of a bedroom

making a small bathroom look more than just an afterthought. One expensive piece to set the style can be placed alongside simpler, cheaper fittings. Colourwash sells basins and washstands that fit the frame. The Romance washstand, with mirror and accessories, is a slim 54cm wide, with a small, deep, stainless-steel bowl. It costs £1,231 plus VAT. The similar Omega stainless-steel

basin, without the stand and mirror, costs £999.

The bathroom keynotes are glass tiles, bricks, wood, marble, granite and limestone, pared-down clean lines, stainless steel and chrome.

"Although traditionally people have had big basins in bathrooms, there's no need as long as you have the depth," says David Jones. "The other way to help a small bathroom

is to put away the clutter. I spend half my life trying to discourage people from building vanity units." A well made, stylish bathroom cabinet is often expensive, but Colourwash can supply a stainless steel corner cabinet for less than £100.

Lakeland and the Holding Company both sell a self-assembly storage unit to fit over a lavatory cistern. The Lakeland version, in rubber-

wood, costs £75; the Holding Company version, in melamine-covered particle-board, costs £85.95. The Holding Company's chrome towel rack, just like those in smart hotel bathrooms, costs just £27.95.

Ideal Standard brochure line: 0800 590 311; Colourwash: 0181-459 8918; Lakeland: 015394 88100; the Holding Company: 0171-610 8180.

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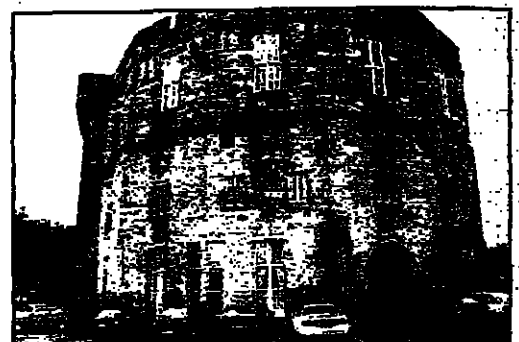
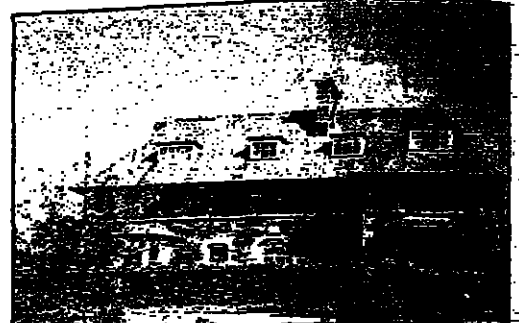
ONCE A private home, Thorner Hall has now been converted into apartments. Flat 6, on the second floor, has views across Windermere to the fells beyond. Reached via a private drive-way, the Hall has communal gardens and private parking spaces for the residents – a prime concern in the Lake District where the numbers of visitors put parking at a premium.

The two-bedroom flat has a 32-ft lounge/dining-room, with a fireplace incorporating a coal-effect gas fire. The kitchen is fitted with a built-in Zanussi hob and a washer/dryer. The maintenance of £45 a month covers upkeep and buildings insurance. £74,950 through Bal-lax Property Services (015394 42161).

NUMBER 54/56 New Tythe Street in Long Eaton, Nottingham, is a 350-year-old cottage, one of the oldest in the area. The white cottage clad in creper has a lounge and a sitting-room, both with beamed ceilings and fireplaces.

and a dining-room with a brick fireplace. Two of the three bedrooms lead into each other, as is often the case with very old cottages. It has a modern fitted kitchen and a bathroom with rope-twist-style suite. Outside there is garaging for three cars and a private enclosed garden. £79,950 through GA (0115 972 5625).

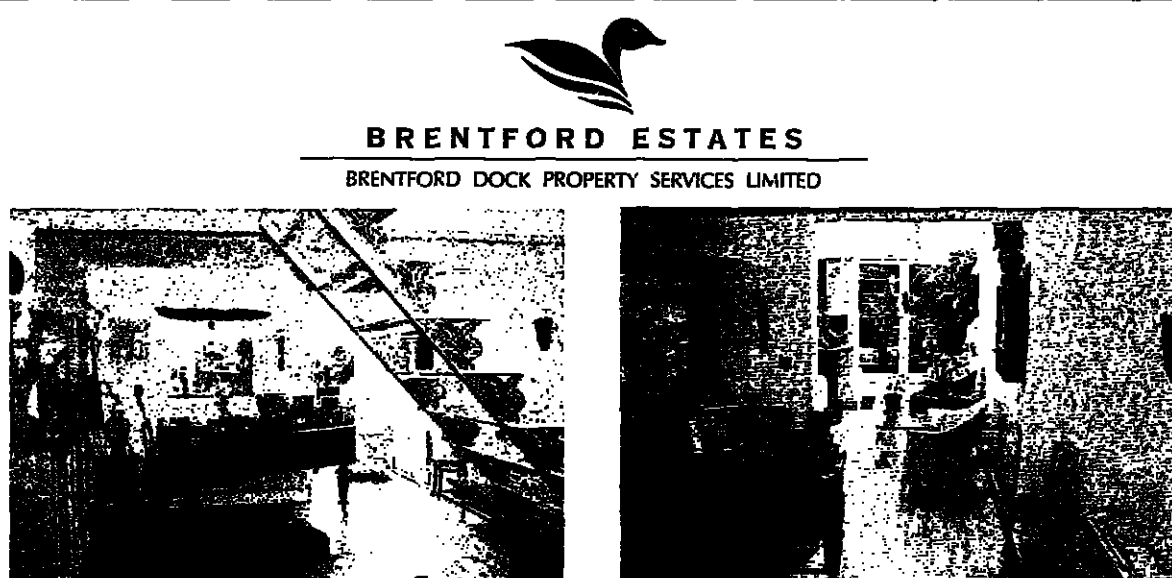
MORPETH COURT is a landmark in the Northumbrian market town, and a handy base for exploring the coast around Bamburgh or the Simonside Hills. Once the old Morpeth court-house, it is now divided into homes. No 1 is a two-bedroom maisonette, with lancet-style windows with tracery. Owing to the design of the building, the rooms are an irregular shape: both bedrooms have internal windows overlooking the lounge. It has a fitted 13-ft kitchen/diner, a downstairs lavatory, and a modern bathroom upstairs. It comes with a single garage in a block. £59,950 through GA (01670 516711).



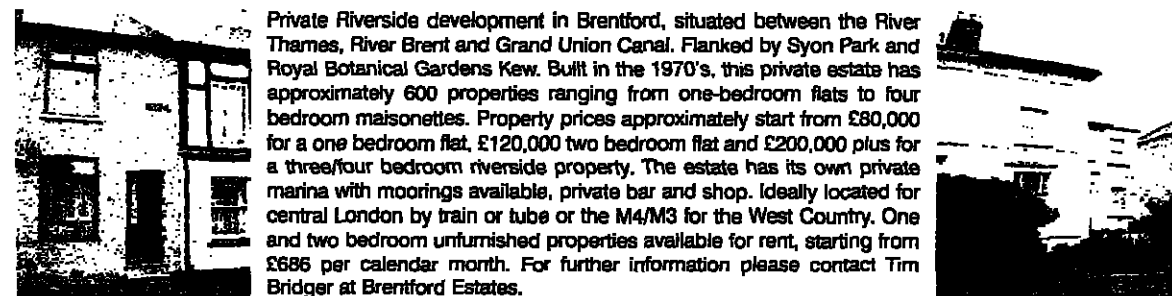
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ORCHARD ROAD, BRENTFORD. A truly original property, outstanding interior, would suit young professional persons, particularly with an artistic flair. A two bedroom terrace cottage in Orchard Road, built in 1835. The property comes with a private garage. The focus point of the reception is its steel staircase with marble tread. The flooring throughout the ground floor has been relaid with maple wood and has been pin lined. The kitchen has an original Butler sink and oak door units, with marble work surfaces. French windows from the conservatory lead into the Japanese style garden with pond and Japanese wooden bridge. The main bedroom has an Art Nouveau style fireplace as its centrepiece. The bathroom consists of a cast iron Bath and Claw bath with built-in heated towel locker. There is potential for a shower cubicle to be added into the bathroom. Orchard Road has its own residents' association that maintains the friendly and attractive character of the road. This property is well worth a viewing to appreciate its full worth. **ASKING PRICE: £185,000.** Viewings are strictly by appointment only.



NEW ROAD, BRENTFORD. This two bedroom terraced property again has an artistic flair to it. Once in the reception there is an iron spiral staircase leading to the upper level of the property. Leading through the reception into the kitchen with usual fitted units and gas connection for a cooker. The bathroom is at the back of the property and has a Jacuzzi style bath. There is a small back garden. On the upper level are the two bedrooms, both doubles. The second room has French doors leading onto a small roof garden, south facing. The property would suit a young professional. **ASKING PRICE: £124,950.** Viewings are strictly by appointment only.

WINDMILL ROAD, BRENTFORD. Three-bedroom Victorian, semi-detached property with a self-contained one-bedroom flat in the basement. Large rear garden which has been well maintained with patio area. Off street parking at the front of the property. On the ground level there is the hallway which leads to the refurbished kitchen and two reception rooms. The stairs lead to two double bedrooms, bathroom and shower room. In the attic is a further bedroom and kitchen/living area. In the basement is a purpose-built one-bedroom flat with small patio area. The property is in excellent order, an ideal family home. In the heart of Brentford. **ASKING PRICE: £219,000.** Viewings are strictly by appointment only.

These properties are a small example of properties which we have in the Brentford area. Being in West London, there is easy access into the centre of town either by train or by tube on the Piccadilly line or the District Line. For those using the motorways the M4 starts in Brentford and the M3 is fifteen minutes' drive away. Brentford is ideally situated for Heathrow Airport and major towns such as Ealing, Hammersmith, Richmond and Chiswick. Brentford offers the community the Watermans Arts Centre (theatre, cinema, art gallery and bar/restaurant), Syon Park and House, Kew Bridge Steam Museum, Musical Museum, Fountain Leisure Centre and nearby offers Hogarth House at Chiswick and the National Trust's grounds at Osterley along with Hampton Court and Bushy Park. For further information on any of the properties advertised or if you require any details of any of our other properties then please contact Tim Bridger on the number below.

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